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ATOMIC COMMANDOS IN ACTION!

MAY-JUNE No 6

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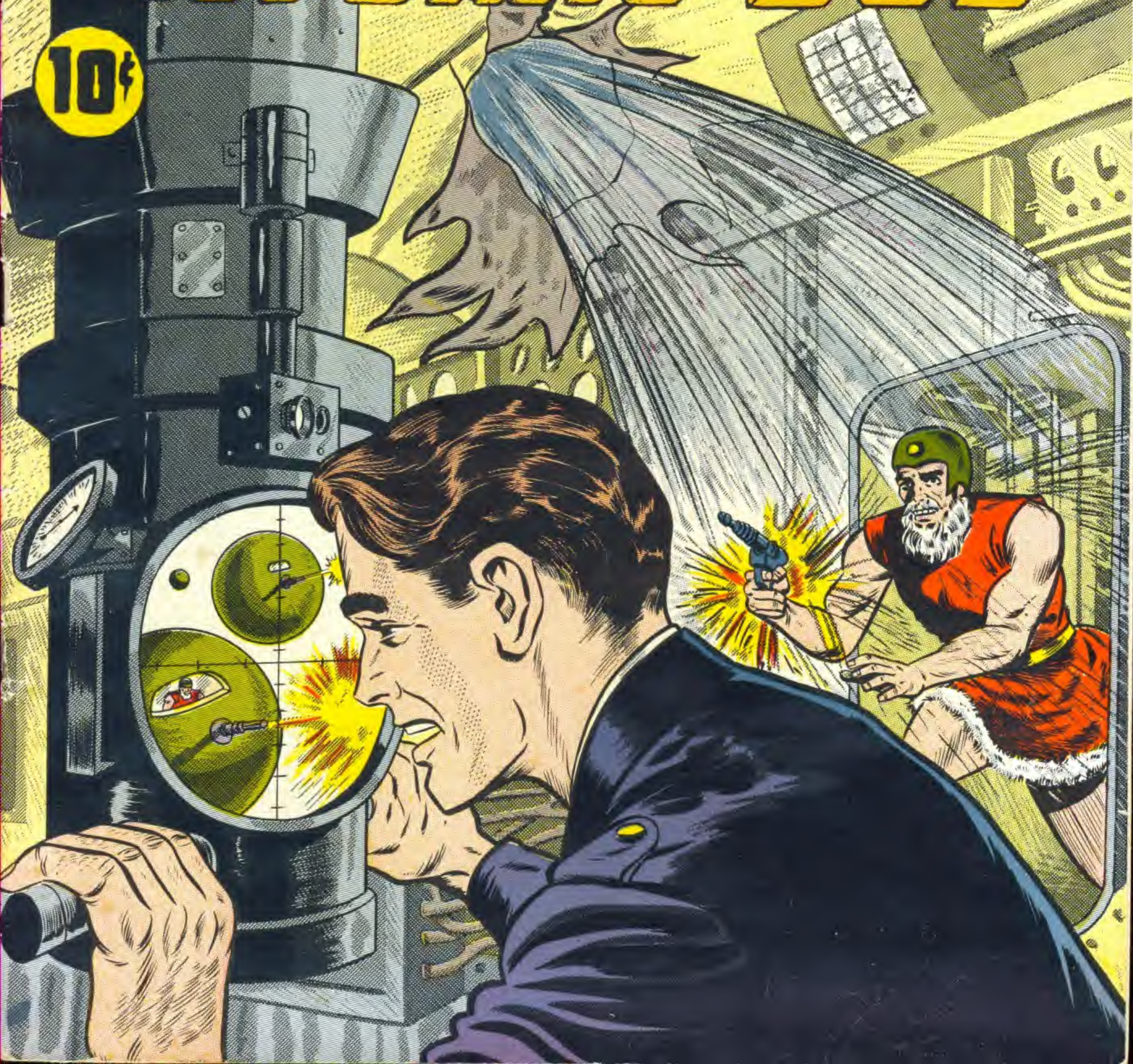
AUTHORITY

Commander Battle

and
the

ATOMIC SUB

10¢



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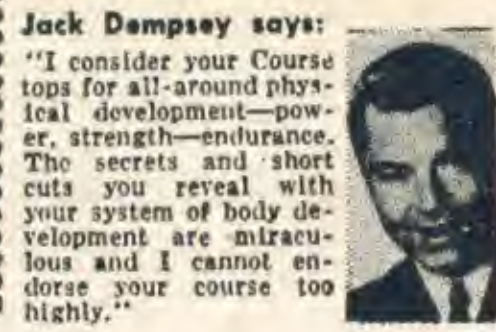
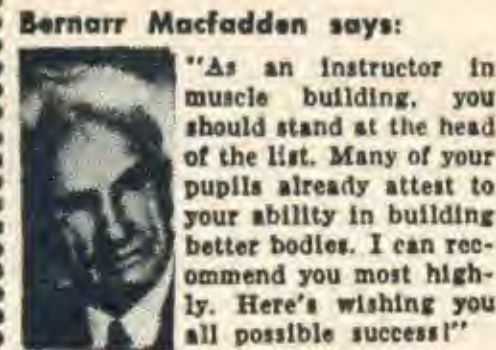


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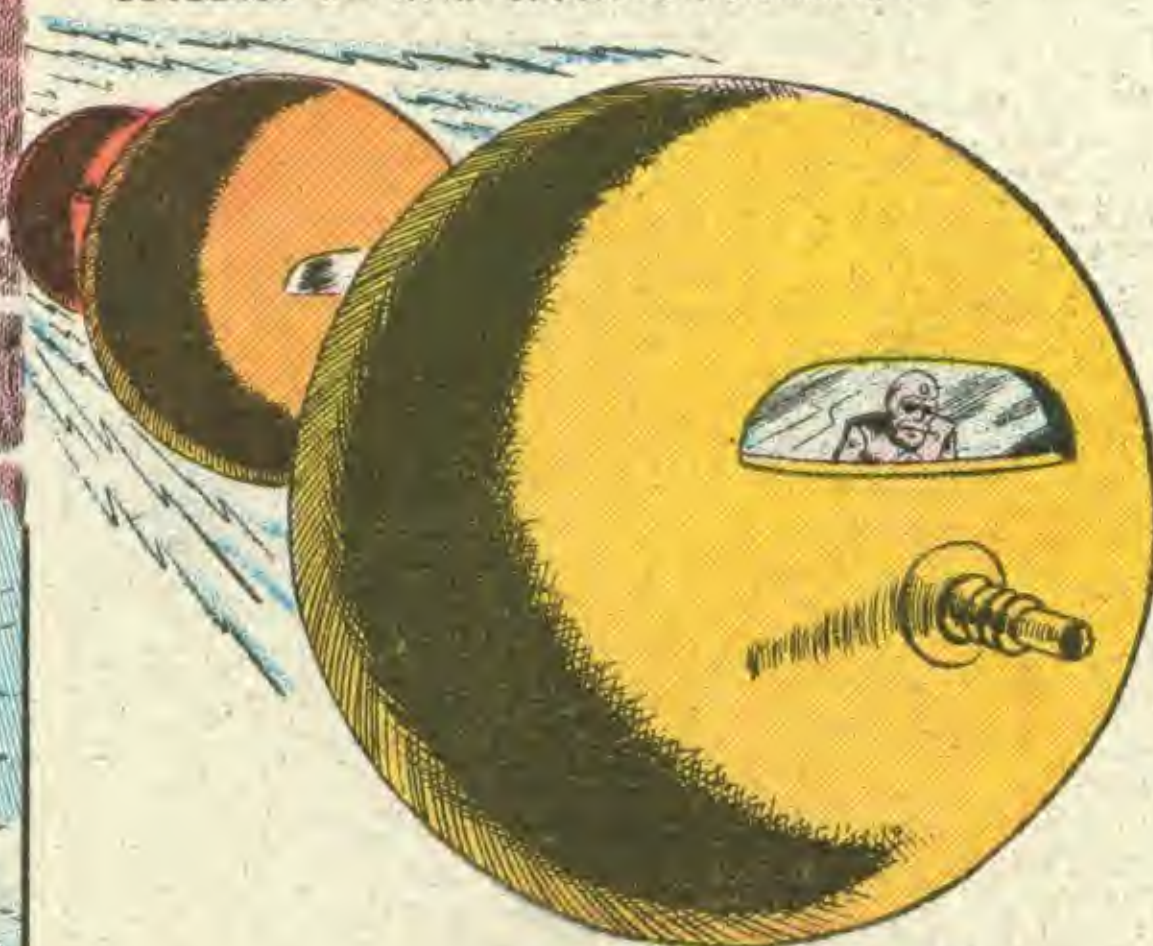
IMAGINE A HUGE EMPIRE THAT HAD EXISTED UNKNOWN FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS...HIDDEN UNDER ICE A HALF-MILE THICK IN THE FROZEN WASTES OF ANTARCTICA! WHAT KIND OF BEINGS COULD LIVE IN SUCH A STRONGHOLD...WHAT KIND OF FANTASTIC WEAPONS MIGHT THEY HAVE? THOSE WERE THE QUESTIONS AS THE ANTARCS ATTACKED...AND RAN HEAD-ON INTO COMMANDER BILL BATTLE AND HIS FIGHTING CREW! HERE'S THE THRILLING STORY OF...



SOMEWHERE IN THE ICY WILDERNESS OF THE ANTARCTIC CONTINENT, A TOWERING MOLTEN JET ROARED UPWARD...CARRYING WITH IT A FLEET OF STRANGE CRAFT!



QUICKLY, THE FLASHING SPHERES GAINED ALTITUDE! THEIR RED-HOT SURFACES COOLED IN THE ICY AIR...AND THEY LEVELLED OFF IN AN OMINOUS FORMATION...



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SECONDS AFTER THE ANTARCS WERE SKYBORNE, THE SHOCK WAVES OF THE ERUPTION TRAVELED HUNDREDS OF MILES—SLAMMING LIKE A GIGANTIC HAND AGAINST THE ATOMIC SUB AS IT CRUISED IN SHALLOW WATER!



ONLY AN ALLOY STEEL HULL COULD HAVE WITHSTOOD THE SHOCK! AS THE VESSEL LURCHED BACK TO AN EVEN KEEL, BILL BATTLE PEERED AT THE RADAR DETECTORS...

BILL... WHAT WAS IT?

I'VE PICKED UP BLIPS SHOWING FAST-MOVING AIRCRAFT HEADING IN THIS DIRECTION! CHAMP... WE'RE GOING UP FOR A LOOK AROUND!



THE INSTANT THE SUB BROKE THE SURFACE, THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS KNEW WHAT THEY WERE UP AGAINST—A FOE QUICK TO ATTACK—WITH WEAPONS UNLIKE ANY THE WORLD HAD EVER KNOWN!

HEY! THOSE CANNON—THEY'RE FIRING SOME WEIRD KIND OF ELECTRIC BOLT!

IF THEY EVER HIT THE ENGINE ROOM, OUR ATOMIC REACTORS ARE FINISHED! QUICK, FELLAS, LET'S GET THIS DECK GUN WORKING!



THEN... THE SKY SPLIT UNDER A HAIL OF ATOMIC SHELLS!

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR FORMATION, CHAMP! THAT OUGHT TO DO IT!



IT WAS A BARRAGE THAT COULD HAVE WIPED OUT A GOOD-SIZED CITY... BUT WHEN THE HAZE OF COMBAT LIFTED...

HUH? AM I DREAMING? WE ONLY DAMAGED ONE OF THOSE THINGS... AND THE OTHERS ARE SPEEDING OFF WITHOUT A SCRATCH!



IN A SCREECHING DIVE, THE DAMAGED SPHERE HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THE SUB—AND MISSED BY A MATTER OF INCHES!

JEEPERS... THOSE FELLAS ARE STILL LOOKING FOR A FIGHT! AND I BET THEY GET ONE!



NOISELESSLY, A HATCH SLID OPEN—AND NOW THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS WERE FACE TO FACE WITH FIGHTERS FROM ANOTHER CIVILIZATION!

WE HAVE SEEN THIS DIVING BOAT MANY TIMES ON OUR GAMMASCOPE! SEIZE IT... DESTROY THE CREW!





BEFORE BILL COULD ORDER A RESCUE ATTEMPT, THE ANTARCS SANK INTO THE FROZEN DEPTHS! ONLY ONE SURVIVOR REMAINED...

YOU HAVE WON... YOUR **LAST VICTORY!** WE ARE READY... THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS...

TOO BAD WE CAN'T HEAR MORE, BILL... BUT HE'S JUST ABOUT FINISHED!



WAS THIS TO BE THE INSTRUMENT OF CONQUEST... THIS SHINING SPHERE BOBBING NEAR THE SUB THAT BROUGHT IT DOWN? CAREFULLY, DOC AND BILL INSPECTED THE STRANGE CRAFT...

IT'S POWERFUL... AND THAT THICK INSULATION PROVES IT WAS BUILT TO WITHSTAND TERRIFIC HEAT, DOC!

THE JET SEEMS TO BE ACTIVATED BY GAMMA G RADIO WAVES... A FORCE OUR SCIENTISTS KNOW HARDLY A THING ABOUT! WHOEVER THESE PEOPLE ARE, BILL... THEY'RE A **CENTURY AHEAD** OF US IN TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW!



A MOMENT LATER, ANOTHER FLAMING CRATER OPENED IN THE ANTARCTIC ICE... AND AGAIN THE SHOCK WAVES HIT WITH THE SUDDEN FURY OF A TYPHOON!

GREAT GUNS... THE SPHERE'S GOING DOWN!

JUMP! WE'LL JUST ABOUT MAKE IT!



NOW, THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS SAW THE MEANING OF THE SHOCK WAVES...

BILL... IT'S ANOTHER FORMATION OF THOSE ANTARCS CRAFT! THOSE SHOCK WAVES ARE FORMED EVERY TIME A NEW SQUADRON IS LAUNCHED!

DOC, TAKE OVER THE SUB AND TRY TO LOCATE THEIR BASE... WHILE I FLY TO WASHINGTON AND TELL 'EM WE'RE UP AGAINST **INVASION!**



COULD THE NATION BE WARNED IN TIME? COULD EVEN OUR MOST MODERN DEFENSES REPEL RAIDERS LIKE **THESE**? THESE WERE THE QUESTIONS... AS THE ATOMIC PLANE ROARED TOWARD OUR IMPERILLED SHORES...



AN EMERGENCY SESSION IN THE WHITE HOUSE...

ALL RIGHT, COMMANDER BATTLE... WE'LL ASSUME THOSE SPHERES ARE BEING LAUNCHED RIGHT THROUGH THE ANTARCTIC ICE! THE QUESTION REMAINS... **WHERE?**

WE'D NEED THOUSANDS OF PLANES TO DISCOVER THE LAUNCHING SITE! MEANWHILE, THE ANTARCS SEEM ABLE TO SEND UP UNLIMITED NUMBERS! AND SO FAR... THE ATOMIC SUB HASN'T FOUND A WAY TO STOP THEM!



HAVE YOU ANY IDEA OF WHAT **CAN** BE DONE, BILL?

WE NEED AN ATOMIC SHELL THAT CAN DEVASTATE A HUGE AREA... SOMETHING THAT WILL BE USED ONLY IN A **SHOW-DOWN!**



(CONTINUED ON PAGE AFTER NEXT)

KIDS! BE THE FIRST
TO SEND FOR THIS

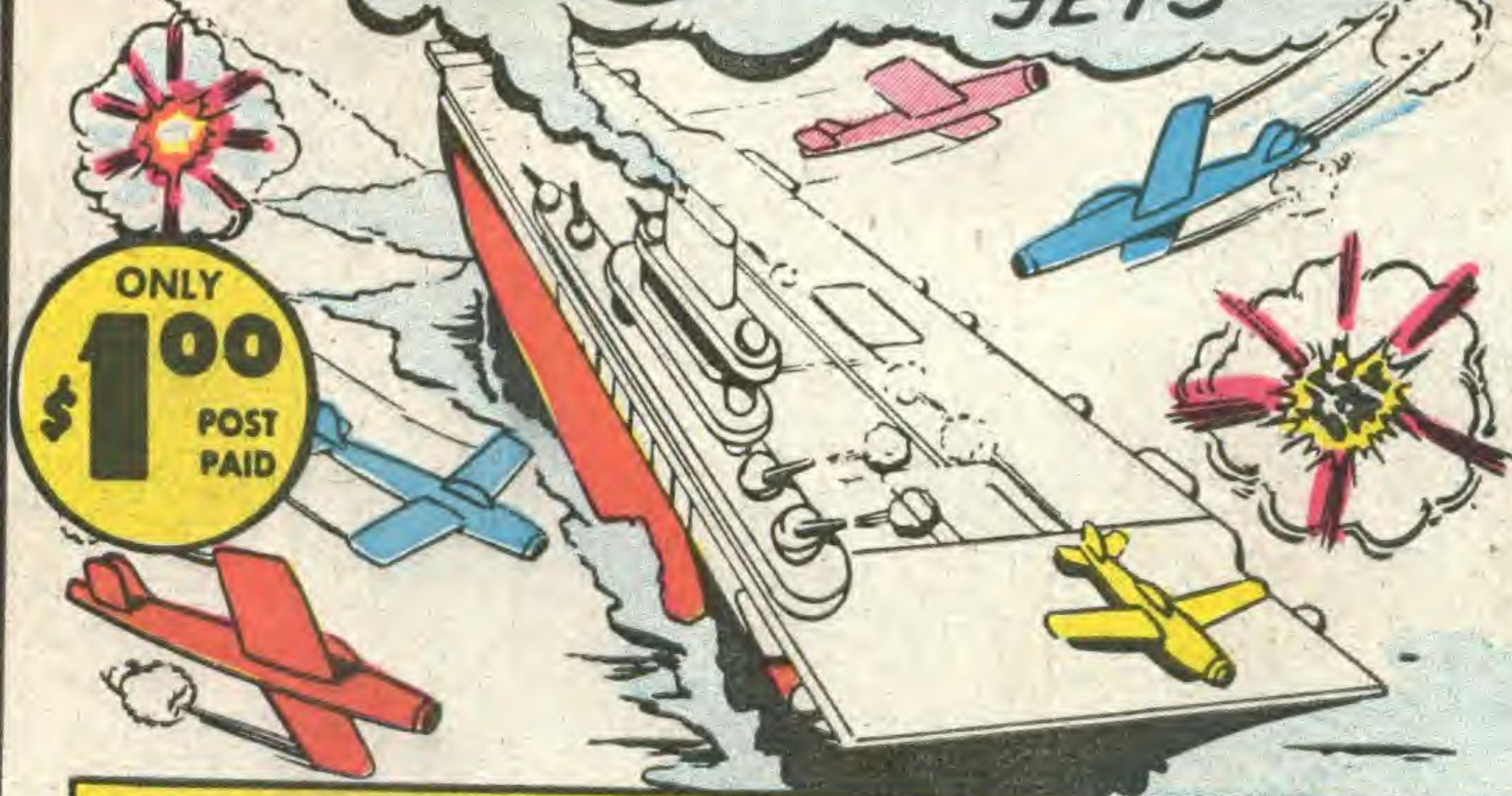
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I'M CONVINCED THAT
ATOMIC SHELL IS
OUR ONLY HOPE...
**IF WE ACT
QUICKLY!**

BILL, WE'VE LEARNED TO
RELY ON YOUR JUDGMENT
WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN!
I'LL HAVE A TOP CREW OF
ATOMIC SPECIALISTS GET
TO WORK IMMEDIATELY!



AN EMERGENCY PHONE CALL FROM BOLINGFIELD...
BLURTED OUT OVER THE ROAR OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT
BATTERIES...

IT'S A MASSIVE ATTACK
...AND WE DON'T KNOW WHO
THEY ARE! BIG SHINING
SPHERES...COMING IN
LOW...

BOOM!



AS THE ANTARC CRAFT SWOOPED
IN AN INFERNO OF CRACKLING BOLTS...



UNCHECKED, THE SPHERES LANDED
SWIFTLY...DISGORGING THE FIRST
CONTINGENT OF INVADERS! THE OFFEN-
SIVE HAD BEEN PLANNED TO THE LAST
DETAIL...THE FIGHTERS TRAINED TO
THE LAST MAN...AND NOW THEY WERE
HERE!

...TO THE WHITE
HOUSE! ONCE WE
CAPTURE THE
PRESIDENT...THE
COUNTRY WILL BE
DEMORALIZED!



THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS HAD AL-
READY LEARNED WHAT THE ANTARC
PRESSURE GUNS COULD DO...BUT THE
INVASION WEAPONS WERE EVEN
HEAVIER MODELS...



AS BILL BATTLE SPED TOWARD BOLING FIELD, HIS ONE
DESPERATE THOUGHT WAS...**COUNTERATTACK!**

THE RAW COURAGE OF OUR TROOPS ISN'T
ENOUGH! I'M GOING TO GET SOME WEAPONS
WE NEED...AND THE ANTARCS HAVE 'EM!



YEP, THERE'S
WHAT I'M AFTER
...**ONE OF
THOSE
ANTARC
SPHERES!**

A SINGLE ATOMIC COMMANDO
SCORNE THE PERIL OF THE
PRESSURE GUNS---AND TOOK
THE OFFENSIVE!

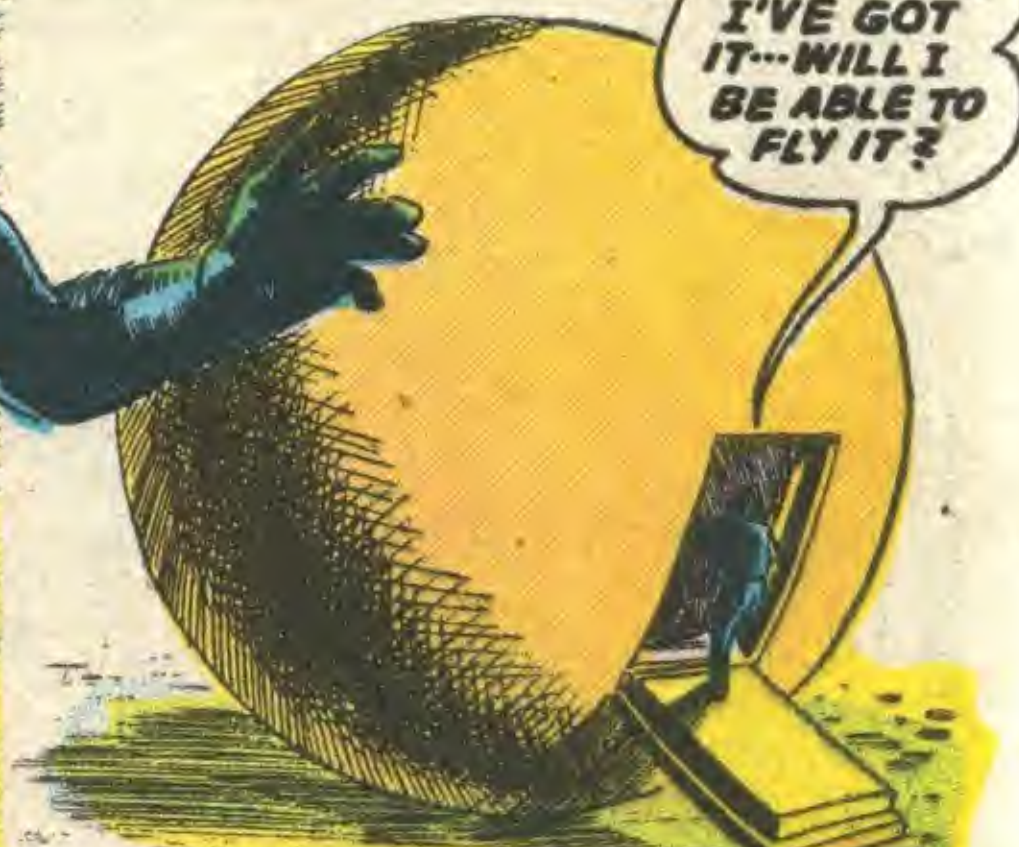


IN THIS LURCHING STRUGGLE REST-
ED THE ISSUE OF VICTORY OR DE-
FEAT FOR THE NATION---AND BILL
BATTLE KNEW HE DARED NOT LOSE!



NOW NOTHING STOOD IN BILL'S WAY...THE SPHERE
HE HAD FOUGHT FOR WAS WAITING! IT STOOD THERE,
GLEAMING---MYSTERIOUS---AND FOR A SECOND
HE WONDERED---

NOW THAT
I'VE GOT
IT---WILL I
BE ABLE TO
FLY IT?



BUT THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS HAD BEEN TRAINED
TO USE THEIR HEADS IN ANY SITUATION AND WITH
ANY TYPE OF MACHINE---

I'VE GOT THE HANG
OF THINGS! IT'S
TAKING OFF!



THE ADVANCING ANTARCS PAID SCANT ATTENTION TO THE
FAMILIAR SIGHT OF ONE OF THEIR OWN SPHERES---EVEN
WHEN IT CIRCLED---AND SWOOPED!



THE ELECTRIC BOLT CANNON THAT HAD BROUGHT THE INVADERS TO THE BRINK OF VICTORY NOW SEARED THEIR RANKS IN VOLLEY AFTER VOLLEY...UNTIL THE LAST OF THE ANTARC VANGUARD CRUMPLED AT THE WHITE HOUSE GATES!



THEN--AS THE SPHERE WHIZZED DOWN FOR A LANDING IN A NEARBY PARK--

WE DON'T HAVE TO GUESS WHO'S PILOTING THAT ENEMY SPHERE! ONLY ONE MAN WOULD HAVE DARED IT--**BILL BATTLE!**

ACCORDING TO THE WHITE HOUSE, HE'S ORDERED A NEW TYPE OF ATOMIC SHELL! FROM THE LOOK OF THINGS...WE'RE UP AGAINST MORE THAN WE SUSPECT!



BILL...WHAT'S THE PICTURE? HAVE WE GOT THEM LICKED?

IF YOU MEAN FOR-STALLING THE **IM-MEDIATE** THREAT...YES! BUT **THIS HAS BEEN JUST A MINOR SKIR-MISH** COMPARED TO WHAT'S COMING!

WE'VE GOT TO MEET THE ANTARCS IN THEIR **OWN** TERRITORY! ONCE THEY'VE BEEN LOCATED, THOSE POWERFUL PRESSURE WEAPONS MUST BE CHECKED LONG ENOUGH TO USE THE **NEW ATOMIC SHELL!**



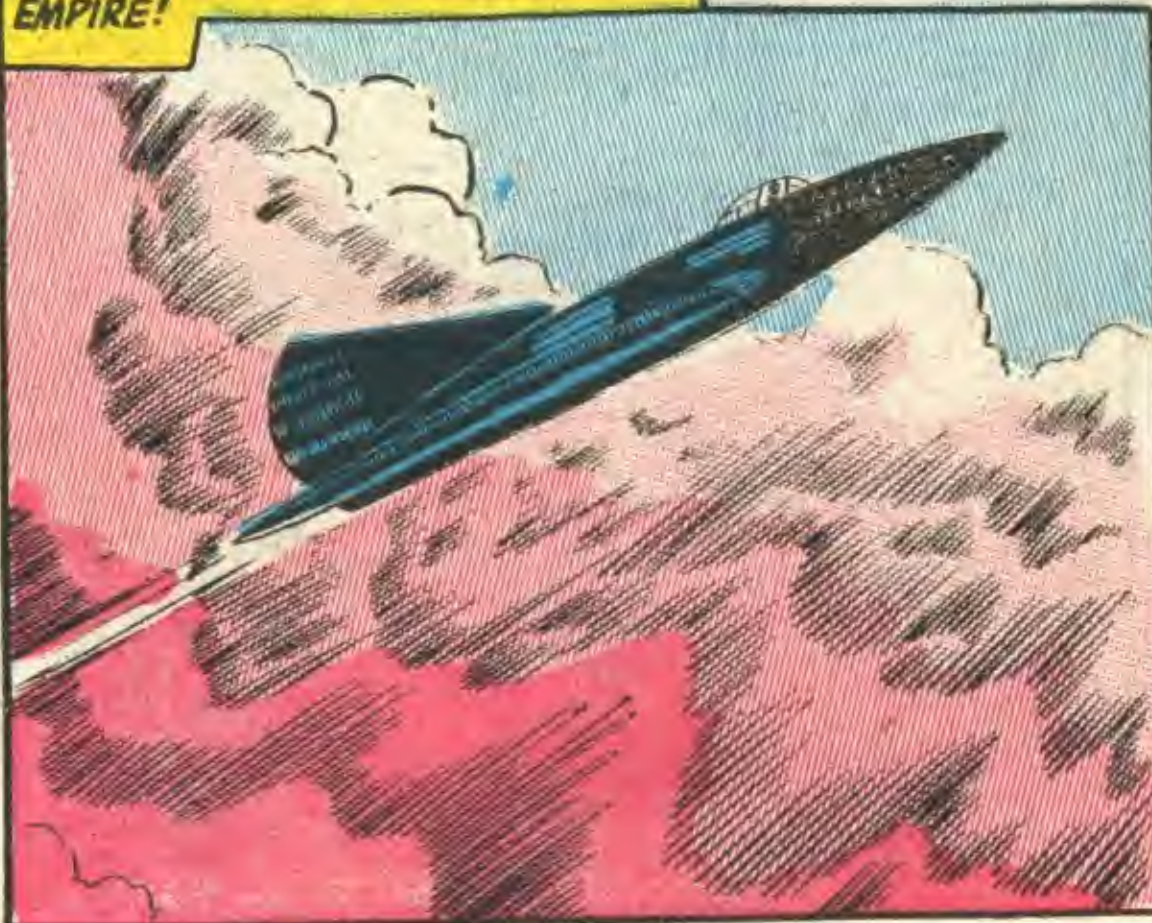
SOON AFTERWARD...THE GLEAMING NEW SUPERSHELL WAS LOADED ABOARD BILL'S ATOMIC PLANE--

I'M AFRAID OF THE POWER IT PACKS, BILL! **DON'T USE IT UNTIL THE LAST DITCH!**

THAT'S A PROMISE, MR. PRESIDENT!



AND SO, FREIGHTED WITH A WEAPON OF LIMITLESS POWER, THE ATOMIC PLANE ROARED TOWARD THE FROZEN CONTINENT THAT HID THE ANTARC EMPIRE!



HOURS LATER, ABOVE THE BLANK DESOLATION OF ANTARCTICA...WHICH HID THE MIGHT OF AN EMPIRE SOMEWHERE BENEATH IT--

BILL BATTLE CALLING ATOMIC SUB! COME IN, CHAMP...WHAT'S NEW DOWN THERE?



A HUNDRED MILES FROM THE SOUTH POLE, CHAMP PICKED UP BILL'S FLASH...



NOTHING NEW, BILL... BUT I'M OUT HERE IN A JET GLIDER SCOUTING TWO HOURS FROM THE SUB'S ANCHORAGE! KEEP CONTACT... MIGHT BE ANOTHER FORMATION COMING ALONG ANY TIME NOW!

AS CHAMP SIGNED OFF, BILL SPOTTED SOMETHING STRANGE BELOW...



THAT CRATER ISN'T MERE ACCIDENT! THERE'S A CHANCE IT MARKS WHERE A METEOR HIT... OR IT COULD BE WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!

Then... WITH A SUDDEN VIOLENCE THAT CAME CLOSE TO TEARING THE PLANE APART...

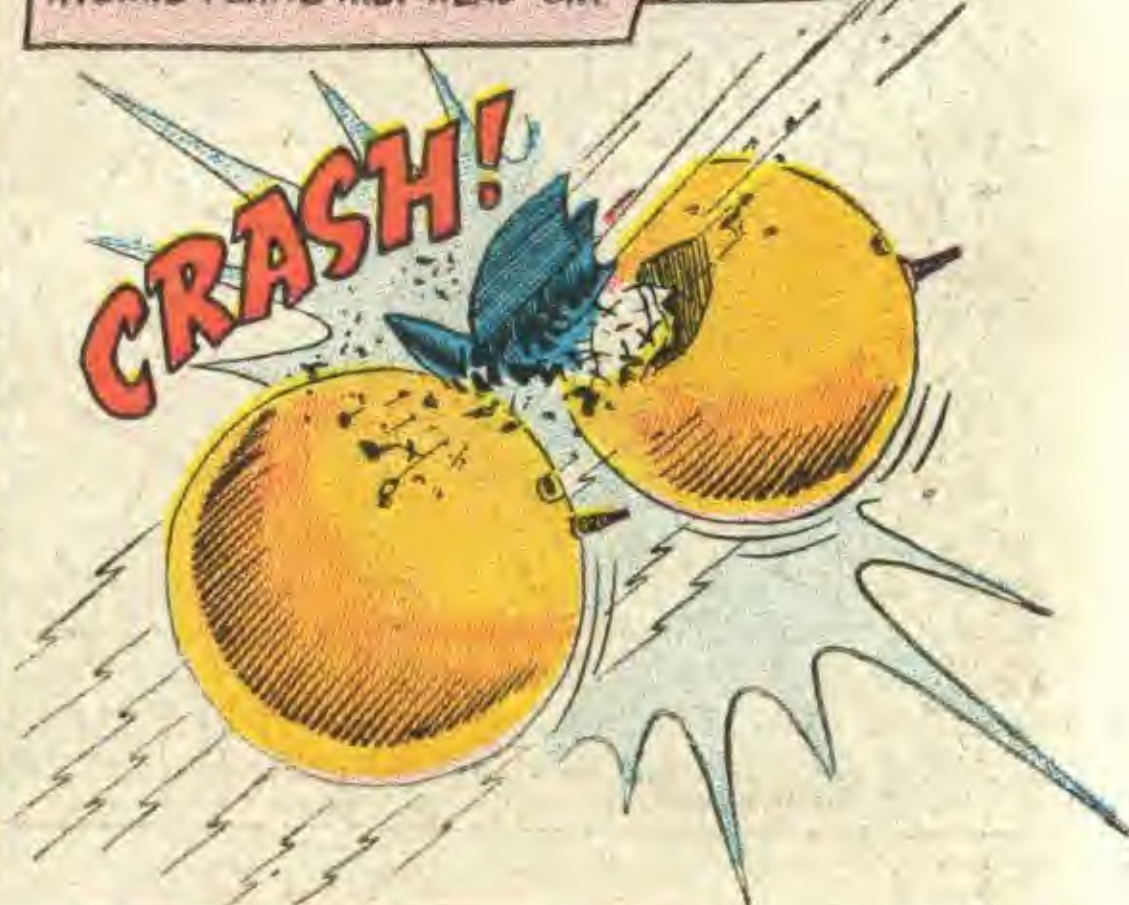


ANOTHER SHOCK WAVE... DIRECTLY BELOW!

IN THE NEXT SPLIT SECOND, IT HAPPENED... THE FIERY COLUMN ROARING UP FROM THE ICE IN A MOLTEN RUSH... CARRYING A DOZEN ANTARC SPHERES WITH IT... RISING RED-HOT FROM THE SEETHING CRATER!



NO PLANE EVER DESIGNED COULD ELUDE THE VELOCITY OF THE FLAMING SPHERES! THERE WAS A SPLINTERING IMPACT OF METAL AGAINST METAL... AS TWO OF THE SPHERES AND THE ATOMIC PLANE MET HEAD-ON!



AS BILL PLUMMETED CLEAR, ONE SOUL-CHILLING GLANCE TOLD HIM THAT HE WAS **NOT** FALLING ALONE... THAT SOMETHING BRIGHT AND POINTED WAS SPIRALLING WITH HIM TOWARD THE ANTARCTIC ICE...



THE ATOMIC SHELL!

The LAST THING HE SAW BEFORE HE BLACKED OUT WAS THE MOST TERRIBLE WEAPON OF THE ATOMIC AGE... IN A PLUNGE THAT THREATENED DESTRUCTION FOR EVERYTHING WITHIN A RADIUS OF A THOUSAND MILES!



WHAT DID DEATH MATTER NOW TO BILL BATTLE... WHEN THE ATOMIC SUB WAS NEAR THE VERY HEART OF THE ONCOMING BLAST... WHEN THE ENTIRE PLANET WOULD BE ROCKED BY A SHEET OF FLAME THAT MIGHT SPREAD RADIATION EVERYWHERE? IT WILL BE OVER IN A SINGLE SECOND... BUT A SECOND CAN SOMETIMES HOLD A MIRACLE! YOU'LL FIND THE JOLTING CLIMAX IN THE NEXT INSTALLMENT... IN THIS VERY ISSUE!

SLEEP *on the* DEEP

LETTER
FROM YOUR
GAL, DON?

YEAH! SHE KEEPS ON ASKING ME TO TELL HER ABOUT **BATTLES** AND STUFF! WHAT HOPE DO I HAVE OF SEEING THAT **HERE?**

Dear Don:
Please write and
tell me about all your
experiences. I just know
you are going through
terrible battles. You are so
brave, dearest, but
so modest. I do
want to know...

WHEN PFC. DON CLARKE WAS SENT TO KOREA, HE THOUGHT HE WOULD BE IN THE THICK OF THE FIGHTING! INSTEAD, HE WAS BASED AT A HOSPITAL---FAR BEHIND THE FIGHTING LINES! ALL CHANCE OF SEEING ACTION SEEMED OUT---UNTIL HE HAPPENED TO TAKE A SLEEP ON THE DEEP!

BATE THAT AFTERNOON, DON WANDERED DOWN TO THE HARBOR TO TRY TO COMPOSE A LETTER...

WHAT AM I GONNA WRITE
MADGE? IF I TELL HER THE
TRUTH... SHE'LL BE DIS-
APPOINTED! IF ONLY I
COULD REPORT SOME-
THING **EXCITING**!
GUESS I'D BETTER
SIT DOWN AND
FIGURE THIS
OUT!

NOT AN IDEA YET!
MAYBE IF I MADE
MYSELF COM-
FORTABLE...

**YES, DON MADE HIMSELF COM-
FORTABLE... TOO COMFORTABLE!
BEFORE HE KNEW IT---**

WHILE DON SLEPT, THE TIDE CREEPT IN AND NIGHT FELL! SOON THE RAFT WAS AFLOAT AND DRIFTING INTO THE HARBOR TOWARD THE OPEN SEA!



HOURS LATER, THERE WAS A SUDDEN, VIOLENT BUMP UNDER THE RUBBER LIFE RAFT! THEN...

YE GODS! I'M AT SEA!



HOLY NELLIE... AN ENEMY SUBMARINE SURFACED RIGHT UNDER ME! SHE MUST'VE SNEAKED INTO THE HARBOR PAST THE NETS!



THE CONNING TOWER'S OPENED! SOMEBODY'S TAKING A LOOK AROUND!



KNOWING THAT THE SUBMARINE COULD INFLICT TREMENDOUS DAMAGE ON THE HARBOR INSTALLATIONS, DON COULD THINK OF ONLY ONE THING TO DO...

SURRENDER! OUR SHORE BATTERIES HAVE YOU COVERED!



THE STARTLED ENEMY OFFICER DROPPED LIKE A SHOT INTO THE CONNING TOWER... SLAMMED THE HATCH SHUT...

SHE'S DIVING! SHE'LL ESCAPE UNLESS I CAN DO SOMETHING! BUT WHAT? WAIT... I'VE GOT IT!



GRABBING UP THE COIL OF ROPE DON QUICKLY LASHED IT TO THE CONNING TOWER!

NOW IF I CAN SECURE THE OTHER END OF THE LINE TO THE RAFT... THE RAFT WILL ACT AS A MARKER! IT'LL SHOW WHERE THE SUB IS!

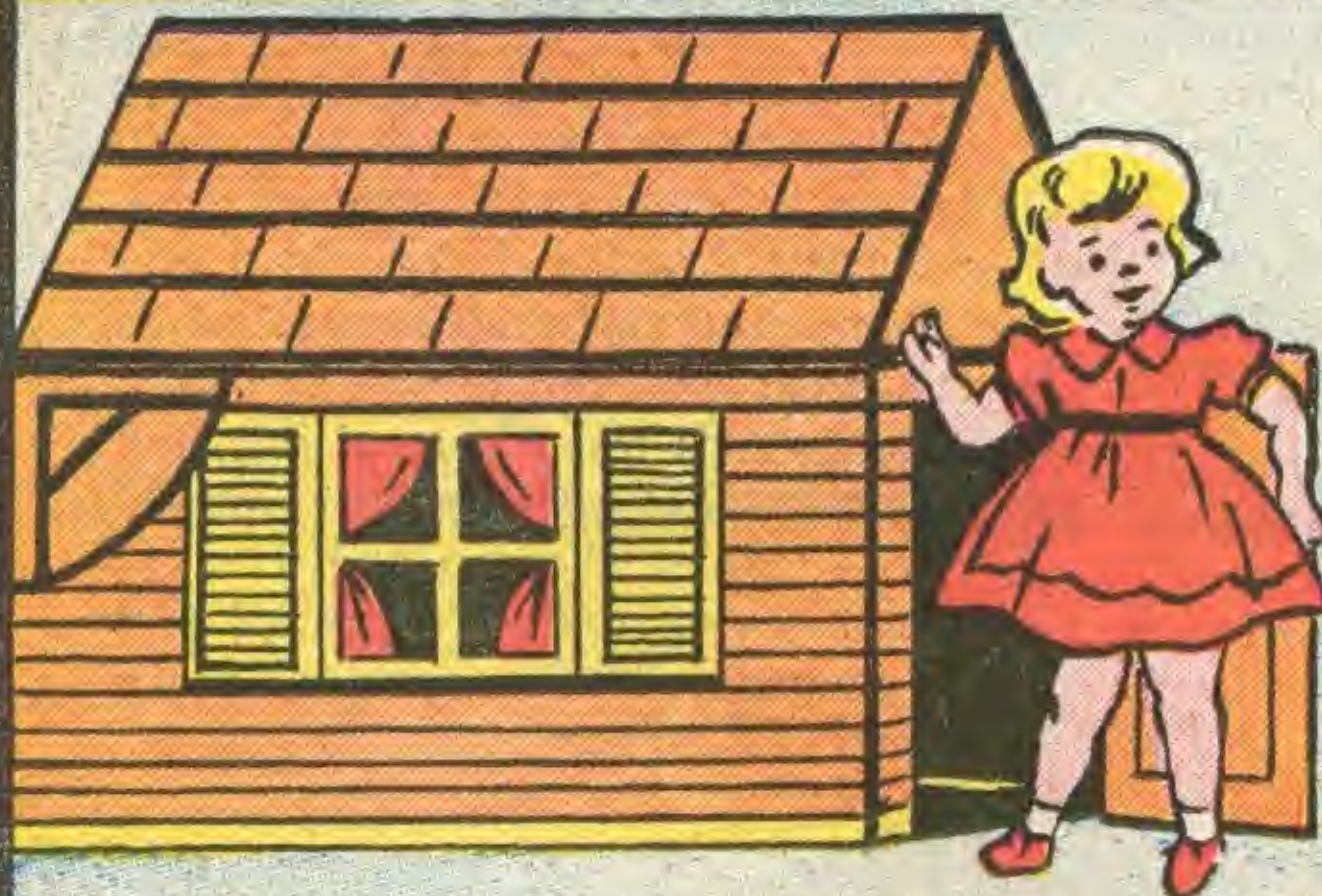




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Those JAPANESE JOBS

IF ever you find yourself in the company of men who fought in the battle of the Coral Sea during World War II, sooner or later the talk is bound to drift to a mention like this: "Say, do you remember those Japanese jobs? I only saw 'em belly-up—but if they'd operated like the Japs planned, it would have been too bad for *our* side!"

Those Japanese jobs. There's a story here, and we think you ought to hear it, if for no other reason than to emphasize the burning loyalty shown towards America by so many Japanese-Americans. Henry Kuramoto was one such. American-born and a Stanford graduate, he was made to suffer terribly after the outbreak of the war by the self-styled "100 per cent Americans" who were so ready to condemn anyone of Japanese extraction as a spy, traitor or worse. There was much he could have done and wanted to do for the United States within the field of science, his chosen profession—but his racial extraction barred him from all critical war work. But Henry was one who always scorned the easy way out—and the sneers and gibes of the super-patriots who held his ancestry against him couldn't alter his burning desire to do his patriotic duty. Finally, military espionage provided the answer. Colonel Phillips explained the setup tensely. "Our operatives have gotten wind of a new Jap underseas craft still on the drawing tables," he explained tensely. "Small subs that can only cruise just below the surface, but at tremendous speed, due to some new motor principle. We've got to get the dope on these things! We've got false identification papers for you and we'll parachute you into the area—the rest is up to you!"

And so it was done. It was easy to lose himself in hectic, wartime Japan, as well as to get employment as a research engineer at the plant manufacturing the new subs. His credentials had been so skillfully forged as to be accepted without question, particularly when the brilliance of his scientific work superseded that of any other man in the plant. And as time went on, Henry learned all there was to know about the new midget sub. It would have been easy, through certain contacts, for him to have escaped

with the knowledge he had acquired, his mission completed—but he wasn't satisfied. He had certain ideas of his own on how he might serve America even more—so he smuggled out his information and remained at work. By now he was completely trusted, and when he came forth with the idea for an even better motor for the small subs, it was accepted enthusiastically. And why not, for it seemed thoroughly effective as well as revolutionary. It was a sort of intricate jet propulsion device, whereby water was taken in at the bow of the sub and expelled at the stern, moving the craft through the water at great speed. Henry waited until the new motors had been rushed through to completion and installed—and then disappeared.

You can be sure that he got back to America safely. As to what he had accomplished, we'll leave that to *you* to judge. It all came out in the battle of the Coral Sea, in which America delivered an all-out challenge to Japanese military might. The Japs had saved their new small subs as a surprise blow that would knock the Yankee fleet out in a single fell swoop. As the heavy units of the Nip navy were battered back, the little subs sped to the attack confidently. But American espionage had prepared our side, and a screen of destroyers sped down on them. The Jap subs had to put on all their speed—and maintain it. How grateful they were for their fine new motors—until *it happened!* Suddenly one of the submarines blew skyhigh in a rending explosion. Then another—a third—until every last one of Japan's vaunted new secret weapons had been torn apart! Their threat removed, the battle roared its way to an overwhelming American victory.

What had happened? It was simple enough—and could be traced directly to one Henry Kuramoto. He had designed cunningly the engines that went into the midget subs—designed them so that sustained high speed would break down the water taken in to an explosive mixture of hydrogen and oxygen. *That's* what happened to those Japanese jobs—thanks to the patriotism and ingenuity of one Japanese-American!



AN ENEMY EMPIRE...HIDDEN UNDER THE MASSIVE ICE OF THE ANTARCTIC CONTINENT! YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ATTACKED BY THEIR RADIO-GUIDED SPHERES...AND NOW THERE ARE EVEN MORE GRIPPING THRILLS AHEAD WHEN COMMANDER BILL BATTLE AND THE **ATOMIC COMMANDOS** MOUNT A COUNTERATTACK THAT WILL MEAN...

THE DOOM of the ANTARCS!

AS BILL BATTLE STREAKED EARTHWARD WITH THE FREE-FALLING ATOMIC SHELL, WAITING FOR THE MOST TERRIBLE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION IN HISTORY AND TOO SURE OF DEATH TO EVEN OPEN HIS CHUTE...THE MIRACLE HAPPENED!

GREAT GUNS...THE WAVE OF ENERGY FROM THE CRATER HAS CAUGHT THE BOMB IN ITS UPDRAFT...AND IT'S LANDING IN THE SNOW WITHOUT SUFFICIENT IMPACT TO SET OFF ITS DETONATOR!

WAS THERE STILL TIME TO OPEN HIS CHUTE? ONE LAST, DESPAIRING TRY! HE LANDED WITH A TERRIFIC THUD...SHAKEN, BUT ALIVE!



IT HAD ALMOST COST BILL'S LIFE...BUT HE HAD REACHED THE SPOT FROM WHICH THE ANTARC SPHERES WERE LAUNCHED! SOMEWHERE BELOW, HE KNEW, MUST BE AN IMMENSE DEVICE THAT SHOT THE SPHERES THROUGH AN ICE SHIELD A HALF-MILE THICK...AND AN EMPIRE EXTENDING FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES UNDER THE ANTARCTIC WASTES!

THE CRATER'S BEGINNING TO FREEZE SHUT AGAIN...THE INTENSE COLD WILL SEAL IT SOLID WITHIN AN HOUR! NOW THAT WE'VE FOUND THE ANTARC STRONGHOLD...HOW WILL WE MANAGE TO PENETRATE THE ICE?



THEN, AS THE NUMBING COLD BEGAN TO TINGLE OVER HIS LIMBS, BILL REALIZED HIS OWN PREDICAMENT...STRANDED DEEP IN AN ENDLESS WHITE EXPANSE!

IT'LL BE TOUGH FIGURING THE SUB'S POSITION...BUT MY ONE CHANCE IS TO KEEP MOVING!



HOUR AFTER TORTURED HOUR, BILL PLOPPED ACROSS THE ICE...FIGHTING OFF UNCONSCIOUSNESS WITH THE THOUGHT OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF HE STOPPED!

I CAN'T DIE...BECAUSE IF I DO...THE WORLD WILL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE...TO FIND THE ANTARCS!

SUDDENLY...TWIN JETS OF SPRAY ROSE THROUGH THE HAZE...TWO AMBER EYES PROBED THROUGH THE FROZEN MIST! AND THEN...

HEY! BILL...IS THAT YOU?



CHAMP! I'M...SO GLAD...

THANK HEAVEN I PICKED UP THAT LAST SHOCK WAVE AND DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE IN THIS DIRECTION!



SOON AFTERWARD, THE JET GLIDER REACHED THE MIGHTY ATOMIC SUB...ANCHORED AT THE EDGE OF THE FROZEN CONTINENT!

BILL! WE'VE HAD THE RADARSCOPE BEAMED SKYWARD LOOKING FOR YOUR PLANE...WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?

I CONKED OUT OVER THE ICE CAP, JONNIE...BUT IT WAS A GOOD INVESTMENT! I'VE LEARNED WHERE THOSE ANTARCS ARE HOLED IN...AND FROM NOW ON WE'RE TAKING THE OFFENSIVE!



COULD THE ATOMIC SUBMARINE, UNAIDED, WAGE WAR AGAINST THE ANTARC EMPIRE...WHOSE ULTRA-MODERN WEAPONS PROVED IT THE MIGHTIEST MILITARY POWER IN HISTORY? IT SOUNDED LIKE SUICIDE...BUT SWIFTLY, BILL AND DOC WORKED TOWARD A DARING CAMPAIGN!

THE ANTARCS MUST HAVE BEEN TRAPPED UNDER THAT ICE DURING THE TIME OF THE CAVEMEN! SOMETHING NOT ONLY KEPT THEM ALIVE...BUT PROVIDED THE LIMITLESS ENERGY FOR THEIR AMAZING SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES!

AND I KNOW WHAT IT IS, DOC...LAVAL HEAT TAPPED FROM THE CENTER OF THE EARTH! IT'S THE HEAT THAT POWERS THE TRANSMITTERS FOR THOSE RADIO-CONTROLLED SPHERES...AND BORES THROUGH THE ICE WHEN THE SPHERES ARE LAUNCHED!



WHY DON'T WE PLOW DOWN IN THERE... AND SLUG IT OUT WITH 'EM?

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO **HAVE** TO DO, JONNIE... BUT GETTING **THROUGH** THAT ICE IS A MIGHTY TOUGH PROBLEM!

WHAT ABOUT THAT **NEW ATOMIC SHELL**? IF WE COULD FIND A WAY TO FIRE IT FROM **ABOVE**... WE'D BLAST OUR WAY CLEAN DOWN TO THE ANTARC STRONGHOLD!

SOMEWHERE NEAR THE SCENE OF BILL'S CRASH... THE ATOMIC SHELL LAY BURIED IN THE ICE! IT WOULD BE EASY ENOUGH TO FIND... BUT HOW COULD IT BE USED... WHEN BILL HAD PROMISED THE PRESIDENT IT WOULD BE FIRED ONLY IN A LAST-DITCH EMERGENCY? GROPING FOR AN ANSWER, BILL PAUSED... GLANCING AT THE MASSIVE HULL THAT CURVED UP INTO SHADOW...

I'VE GOT IT!
WE CAN'T USE THE SHELL ON THE SURFACE, MERELY TO SMASH THE ICE... BECAUSE THE BLAST WOULD RELEASE DANGEROUS RADIATION! WE NEED SOMETHING POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CARRY THE SUPER-SHELL INTO THE HEART OF THE ANTARC TERRITORY... **AND THE ONLY THING THAT CAN DO IT IS THE ATOMIC SUB ITSELF!**

IMPOSSIBLE, BILL! POWERFUL AS THE SUB IS... IT CAN'T SHEAR THROUGH ICE A HALF-MILE THICK!

IT COULD... IF IT WERE **DROPPED!** THE AIR FORCE HAS JUST TAKEN OVER A HUGE EXPERIMENTAL TRANSPORT... A TEN-JET MODEL... **AND IT'S JUST THE BABY FOR THE JOB!**

MINUTES LATER
...AN URGENT FLASH REACHED THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND!

WHAT GOES ON, CHIEF? BILL BATTLE WANTS THAT BIG JET DOWN AT THE SOUTH POLE... AND WHAT'S MORE... **IT'S GOT TO BE RIGGED WITH A SPECIAL CRADLE DESIGNED TO LIFT A DEAD WEIGHT OF THREE THOUSAND TONS!**

IF THAT'S WHAT THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS NEED, GET WORKING ROUND THE CLOCK... **AND GIVE THE JOB TOP PRIORITY!**

FINALLY, THEY HEARD IT... THE DISTANT ROAR THAT MIGHT SPELL ANTARC FORMATION! BUT INSTEAD THIS TIME...

IT'S THE **JET TRANSPORT!**

WHAT A **MONSTER!** AND LOOK AT THAT LIFTING RIG SLUNG UNDERNEATH!

HOLY COW... LOOK AT 'EM! THAT'S THE COUNTRY'S TOP BRASS... WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?

WHEN THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF MAKE AN EMERGENCY FLIGHT...THE SECURITY OF THE NATION HANGS IN BALANCE! UNTIL NOW, BILL BATTLE HAD HAD A FREE HAND...BUT NOW...

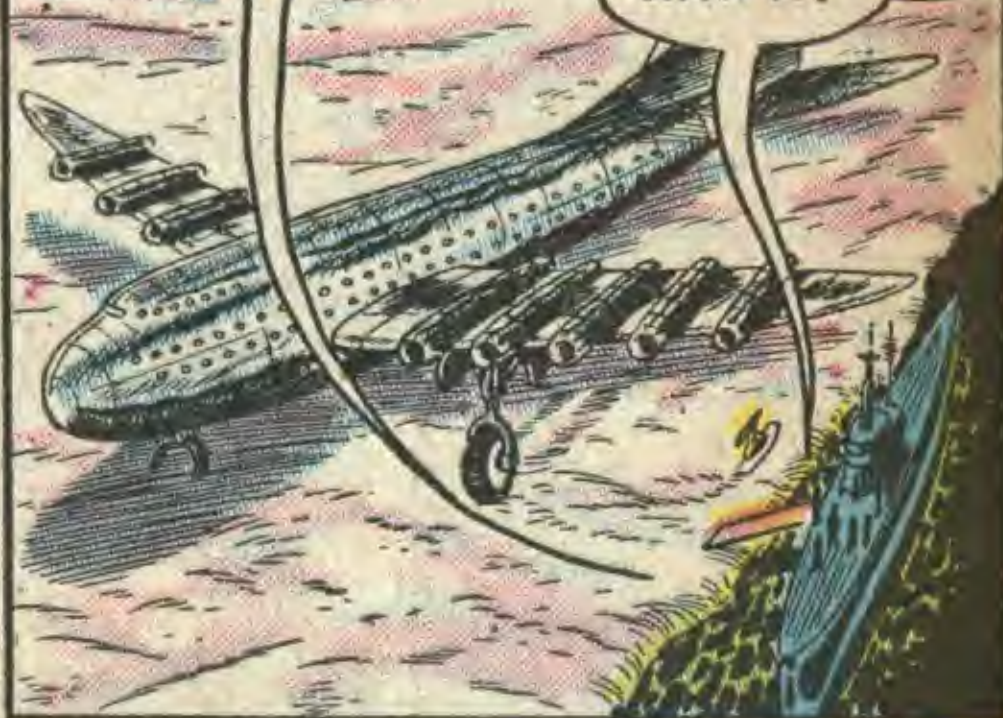
WE'RE GOING TO BE BRIEF, COMMANDER! WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU UP TO?

MY PLAN, SIR, IS TO HAVE THE TRANSPORT LIFT THE ATOMIC SUB TWENTY THOUSAND FEET ABOVE THE ICE CAP...AND THEN RELEASE IT AS A HUGE BOMB! THE SUB'S WEIGHT AND DIAMOND-HARD HULL WILL SHATTER THE ICE, AND THEN WE'LL HAVE THE SUPER-SHELL WHERE WE WANT IT...IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ANTARC EMPIRE!



YOU'RE RISKING THE ATOMIC SUB...THE COUNTRY'S ONLY HOPE IF THE ANTARC'S STAGE AN ALL-OUT ONSLAUGHT!

IT'S THE ONLY PLAN THAT HAS THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING! BY TOMORROW THE ANTARC'S MAY HAVE LANDED IN THE CAPITALS OF THE WORLD...WE'VE GOT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT!



WELL, WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN...THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS ARE RESPONSIBLE ONLY TO THE PRESIDENT! AND SO...

ALL RIGHT, BILL! OUR AIR FORCE TECHNICIANS WILL START SECURING THE SUB TO THE TRANSPORT'S HULL IMMEDIATELY!

GREAT! WHILE THEY'RE WORKING ON THAT...CHAMP AND I WILL HEAD OUT ONTO THE ICE AND RECOVER THE ATOMIC SUPERSHELL!



AND SO, FINALLY, THE JOB WAS DONE! THE ATOMIC SUB, FREIGHTED WITH THE AWFUL EXPLOSIVE, WAS RAISED ALOFT...



BUT WON'T THE SHELL EXPLODE WHEN WE HIT THE ICE, DOC?

NO, JONNIE! IT'LL BE CUSHIONED AGAINST THE IMPACT IN A SPECIAL CHAMBER...UNTIL WE'RE READY TO FIRE IT! AND WE'LL BE SUSPENDED IN SHOCK-PROOF, GYROSCOPIC VACUUM CRADLES THAT'LL GUARD AGAINST THE TERRIFIC IMPACT!

AS THE PILOT SIGNALS, THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS RUSH TOWARD THE BOARDING LADDER! NOW THEY WEAR LEAD-SHIELDED SUITS IN GRIM READINESS FOR A FEARFUL NUCLEAR BLAST...



THAT'S THE TAKEOFF SIGNAL, JONNIE...GET MOVING!

SLOWLY, AT FIRST, THE MAMMOTH TRANSPORT LUMBERS ACROSS THE ICE...ITS FUSELAGE CREAKING UNDER THE DEAD-WEIGHT OF THE SUSPENDED SUB! THE FAILURE OF A SINGLE JET WOULD SPELL UNTOLD DISASTER...AND AS THE CHIEFS OF STAFF WATCHED TENSELY...



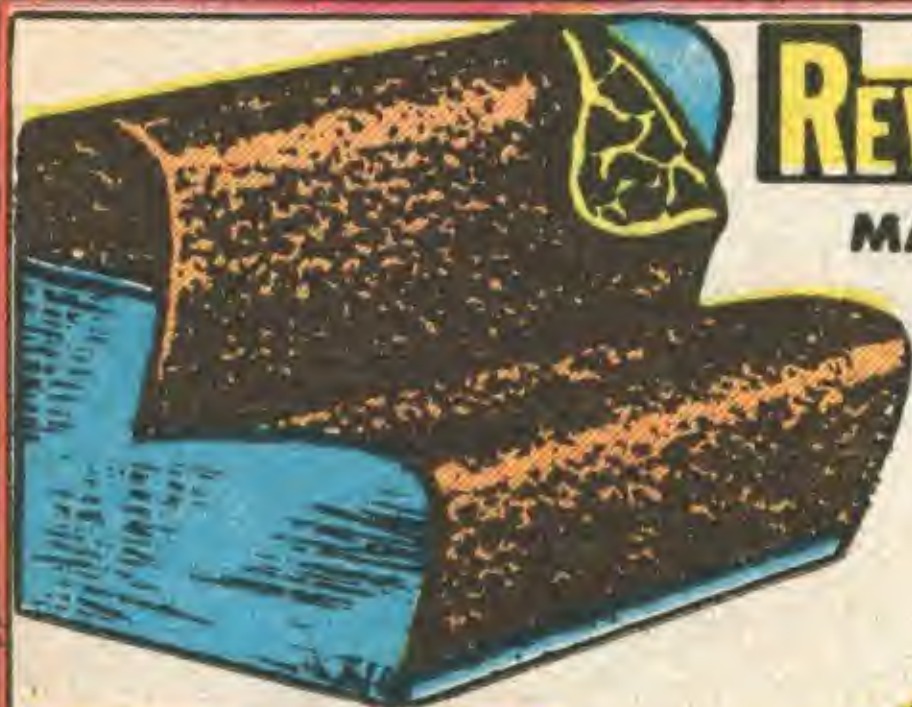
THEY'RE AIR-BORNE!

TWELVE THOUSAND FEET...EIGHTEEN THOUSAND...WHILE THE FATEFUL SECONDS TICKED BY...



OH, BROTHER...I ONLY HOPE THE SUB'S HULL IS AS HARD AS WE THINK IT IS!

(CONTINUED ON PAGE AFTER NEXT)



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THIS WAS THE MOMENT...FOUR MILES UP! A LEVER TRIPPED AUTOMATICALLY...AND THE SUB STREAKED DOWN!



GLINTING IN THE FROZEN SUN-LIGHT, THE SUB CLEAVED TOWARD THE ICE! AND SUDDENLY, DIRECTLY IN ITS PATH, ANOTHER FIERY SPOUT ROARED FROM THE DEPTHS OF ANTARCTICA!



THESE WERE THE CRAFT THAT HAD DE- FIED THE ATOMIC CANNON! BUT NOW THEY CRASHED HEAD-ON INTO THE IN- DESTRUCTIBLE HULL OF THE SUB ITSELF...AT A SPEED THAT BLASTED THEM APART!



Then...THERE WAS A JOLT LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE... AND THE SUB PLOWED INTO THE RAPIDLY-FREEZING CRATER!



NOTHING COULD CHECK THIS HURLING PROJECTILE OF THREE THOUSAND TONS...UNTIL IT CAME TO A GRATING HALT IN THE STRONGHOLD OF THE ANTARCS! IT HAD HIT SOME LARGE, STRANGE STRUCTURE...



YES, IN LANDING THE ATOMIC SUB HAD DE- STROYED THE GAMMA G RADIO TRANS- MITTER! AND EVEN BEFORE THE COMMANDOS THEMSELVES WERE AWARE OF IT, SOMETHING WAS HAPPENING OVER CALIFORNIA...AND ENGLAND ...AND A DOZEN OTHER SECTIONS OF THE EARTH THAT HAD SEEN THE SHADOWS OF THE INVADING SPHERES!

THERE THEY COME! BUT GREAT GUNS... THEY CERTAINLY DON'T EXPECT TO MAKE A LANDING HERE!

THEY'RE NOT TRYING TO LAND! THOSE SPHERES ARE OUT OF CON- TROL...THEY'RE GOING TO CRASH!



THUS, IN A SINGLE STROKE, CAME THE END OF ONE PHASE OF THE ANTARC CHALLENGE...AND A SKYBORNE TERROR SCREAMED INTO OBLIVION AS SCORES OF POWERLESS SPHERES HURTLIED TOWARD DESTRUCTION!



THE DEADLY SPHERES WOULD NEVER RANGE THE SKIES AGAIN... BUT THE ANTARC EMPIRE ITSELF REMAINED INTACT!

THAT'S THEIR LAVAL JET CHAMBER, JONNIE... WHICH USES MOLTEN ROCK FROM THE CENTER OF THE EARTH TO BLAST THE SPHERES UP THROUGH THE ICE!

SO FAR, THE ANTARCS DON'T SEEM AWARE THAT WE'RE DOWN HERE!



CAUTIOUSLY, THE FOUR PRESSED FORWARD--WHEN A MUFFLED RUMBLE FROZE THEM IN THEIR TRACKS! THEN --FROM A CAMOUFLAGED FORTRESS--

THE WORLD-MEN ARE HERE! BLAST THEM APART WITH YOUR PRESSURE GUNS!



THE FIRST VOLLEY SHOULD HAVE SNUFFED THEM OUT IN A FLASH... BUT IT NEVER CAME!

BUT THE ANTARCS HAD FOUND MANY USES FOR THE LAVAL HEAT DRAWN FROM THE CENTER OF THE EARTH...

THE GUNS ARE BEWITCHED... THEY WILL NOT FIRE!

I COULD HAVE TOLD THEM THAT, JONNIE! THE PRESSURE FOR THOSE GUNS WAS ACTIVATED BY RADIO WAVES... AND WE'VE DESTROYED THE TRANSMITTER!

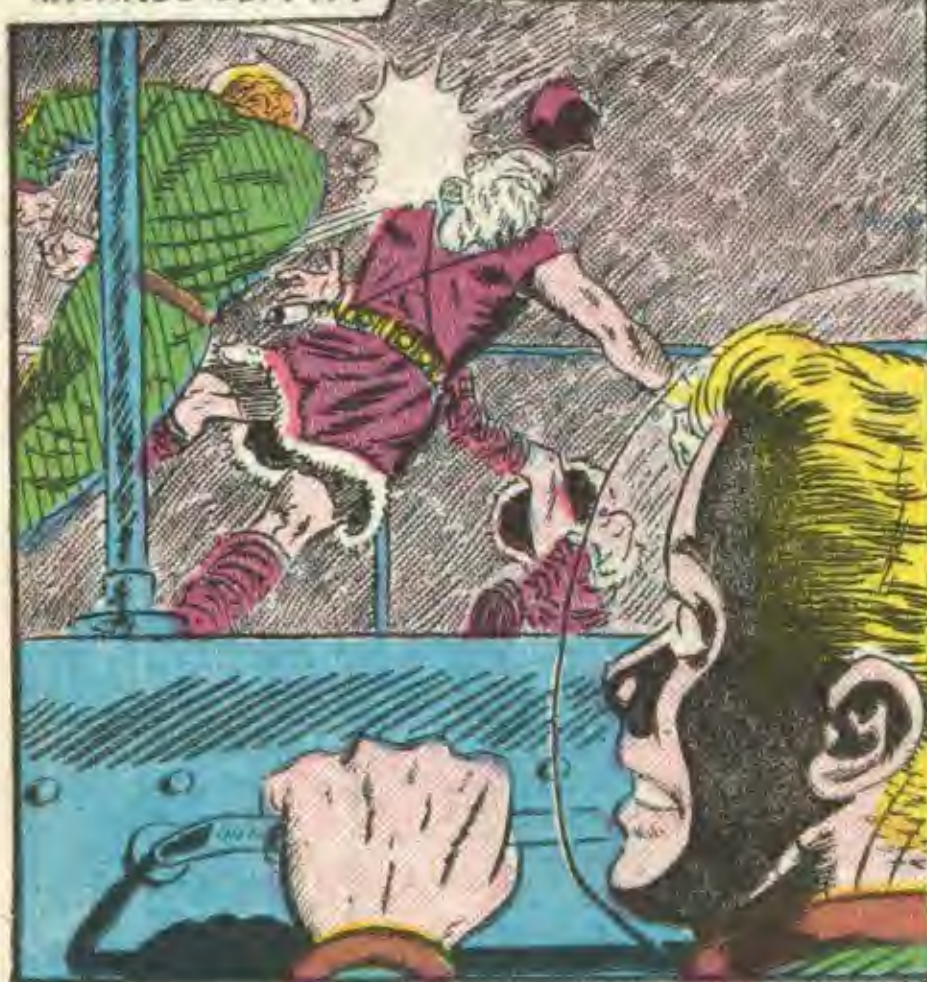
FLAMETHROWERS! QUICK... BACK TO THE SUB!



WATCH OUT... TWO OF 'EM GOT HERE AHEAD OF US!



IN A HEADLONG LEAP, CHAMP MADE THE DECK--AND IN THE NEXT INSTANT, BOTH ANTARCS LEFT IT!



BUT NOW A HOWLING MASS OF ANTARCS BORE DOWN ON THE SUB WITH MOLTEN STREAKS HISSING FROM THEIR FLAME-WEAPONS! IT WAS A HEAT DRAWN FROM THE SEETHING CORE OF THE EARTH --AND BILL KNEW THAT NOT EVEN THE SECRET ALLOY OF THE SUB'S HULL COULD WITHSTAND IT!

INSIDE! IF WE'RE EVER GOING TO FIRE THE ATOMIC SUPERSHELL... IT BETTER BE NOW!



THE DELAYED FUSE WOULD GIVE BILL A SCANT FIFTEEN SECONDS TO REACH THE OPEN HATCH--

GOOD THING THE SUB'S GOT A LEAD INNER HULL TO PROTECT IT FROM RADIATION...



THERE WAS A MIGHTY ROAR AS BILL PULLED THE LANYARD! BUT THIS WAS MERELY THE ATOMIC CHARGE THAT SPED THE SHELL ON ITS WAY--THROUGH THE MASSES OF ANTARCS AND TOWARD THE METROPOLIS BEYOND THEM! FROM THAT INSTANT--



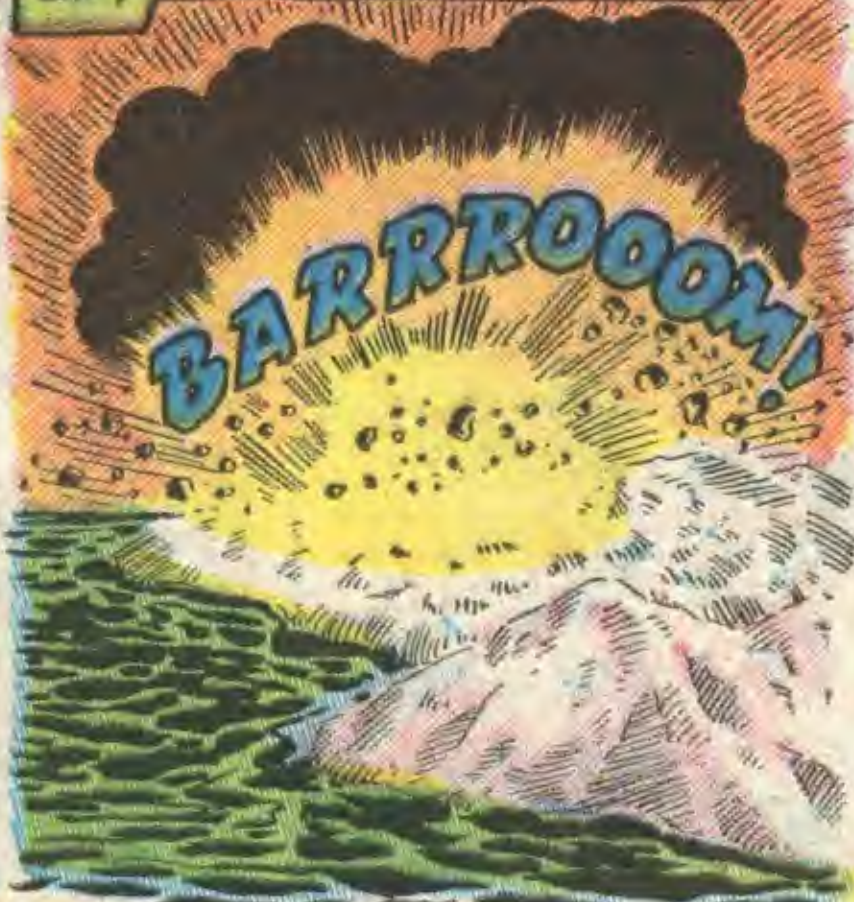
TWO SECONDS TO DROP THE LANYARD AND ONE TO TURN--FIVE MORE TO RUSH ACROSS THE DECK AND DIVE DESPERATELY, PANTINGLY, TOWARD THAT OPEN HATCH!

SIX MORE SECONDS TO SPIN THE HERMETIC VALVES THAT SEALED THE SUB--AND THEN--A BLAST THAT ROCKED THE POLAR CAP!

THE ICE ROOF OF ANTARCTICA COLLAPSED IN TREMENDOUS SLABS--THE MEASURELESS NUCLEAR HEAT MELTING THE CHUNKS AS THEY FELL!

EIGHT... NINE...

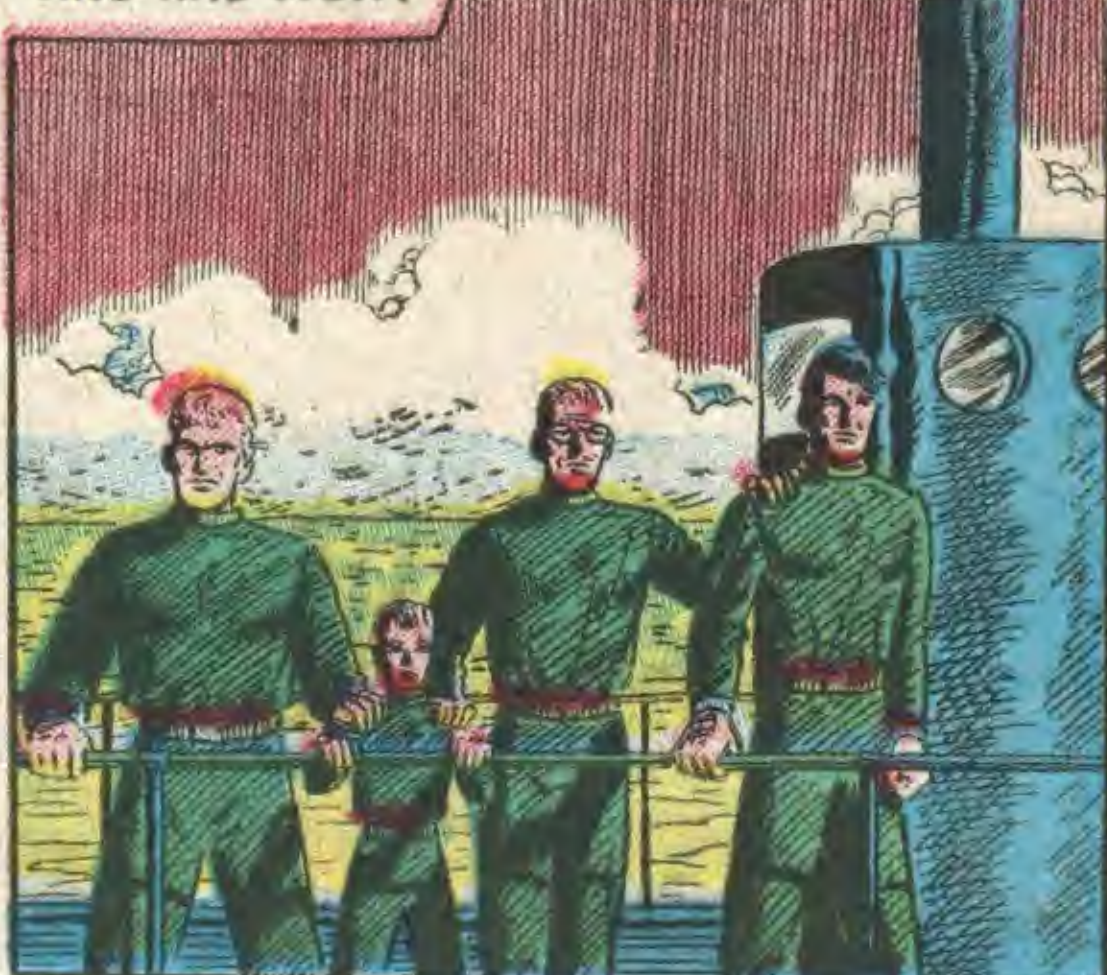
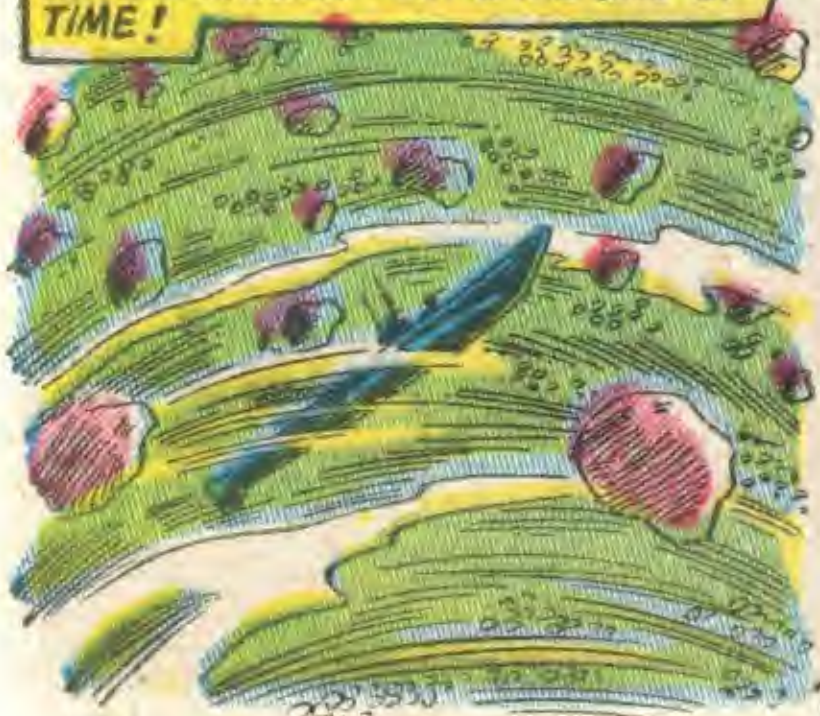
QUICK... GRAB HOLD!



THIS WAS THE DOOM OF THE ANTARCS--A CHURNING MASS OF WATER FORMED BY THE UPSURGING FURY OF THE NUCLEAR CLOUD--WHICH SENT THE ATOMIC SUB SPIRALLING SAFELY TO THE SURFACE! WITHIN AN HOUR, THE POLAR ICE WOULD FREEZE AGAIN--LOCKING THE RADIOACTIVE RUINS OF AN EMPIRE UNDER A WHITE BARRIER--UNTIL THE END OF TIME!

AND SO ONCE AGAIN THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS HAD RISKED THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR FELLOW-MEN--AND HAD WON!

BUT ONE THING IS SURE--EACH VICTORY AND EACH ADVANCE OF SCIENCE HOLDS THE POSSIBILITY OF EVEN MORE BITTER STRUGGLES IN THE FUTURE! IT MAY COME LIGHTNING-FAST FROM ANY QUARTER--BUT YOU'LL FIND THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS READY FOR ANOTHER SMASHING COUNTER-ATTACK IN THE NEXT ISSUE!



THE END!



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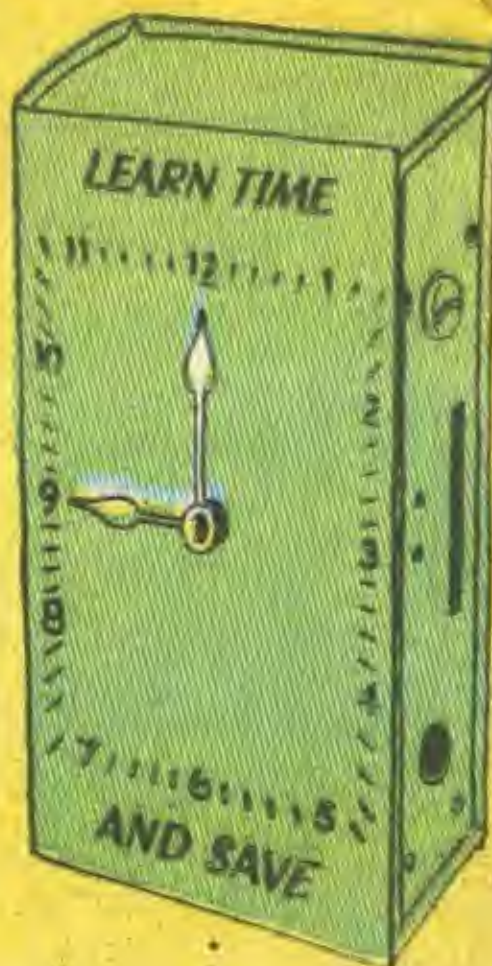
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HIT-and-RUN!

WHEN the great battle of the Coral Sea was fought, Bill Battle was a Navy squadron leader, and when he nosed his Corsair down through the thick flak thrown up by the Jap battleship *Kikoto* it didn't seem possible to live through the ordeal. Somehow he managed to get his bombload away toward a direct hit, but in the process his plane was severely damaged. It was all he could do to keep it in the air, and when he finally crashed at sea 20 minutes later he was far from any friendly vessel.

Supported by a small rubber raft, with only limitless horizons surrounding him in the shark-infested waters, he didn't give much for his chances. He hung on through the night, and next morning, when he spotted a periscope less than 50 yards away, his great love affair with submarines began.

First, he owed his life to the presence of the American sub, and because the vessel had a combat mission to perform, namely the destruction of Japanese coastal shipping, there was no chance of a quick return to his outfit. The commander of the sub was mildly contemptuous of the pilot he had saved.

"You guys think you've got it rough in the air," he sneered. "Just wait, bud. Wait'll you see what we're up against!"

Bill Battle was skeptical, especially as he'd always had a fairly low opinion of the subsurface branch of the Navy. Several days later, within sight of the Japanese coast, he got his first real thrill. The captain had a large freighter under periscope observation, and began barking staccato orders until, "Torpedoes away!" There was a fearful explosion, and then the Nipponese freighter was no more.

"Not bad," said Bill. "But it's a hit-and-run business. I like *slugging it out* with the enemy!"

The confined quarters of the sub then

began to get on Bill's nerves, and he began to appreciate just how tough an assignment an undersea craft was. For weeks he was present as the vessel prowled the Japanese coasts, hitting and running, taking a terrific toll. And then the time came when Bill Battle learned what it was like to be in a submarine when it was *under attack*!

A Zero reconnaissance plane spotted them, and within the hour, a flotilla of destroyers was on its way to the scene. The American sub turned on full steam, but its top speed couldn't match that of surface craft. The radarscope showed that the enemy was approaching fast, was almost on top of them!

"Cut all motors! Submerge!" the captain bellowed.

The next five minutes were the worst Bill Battle had ever experienced. Lying on the bottom of the sea, with no chance to fight back, when any moment a depth charge might blow them apart, he learned that to risk dying like a trapped rat, and to know that this was the possible fate of any man who ventured into a sub—that was the greatest courage of all!

Amid the tremendous detonations the hull heaved and creaked—but held! The captain's face was grim as he ordered: "Release an oil slick—it's our only chance!" Moments later the explosions ceased. "They think we're done for," he said, "but I can't take any chances. We'll lie here 24 hours before we dare go upstairs. Those destroyers are probably still hanging around."

Weeks later, when Bill Battle rejoined his comrades aboard the aircraft carrier *Lexington*, the ship's captain was astonished at his request for a transfer. "But *why*?" he roared. "Why choose *pigboats*?"

"Because, sir," said Bill, "it's the toughest branch of the armed forces!"

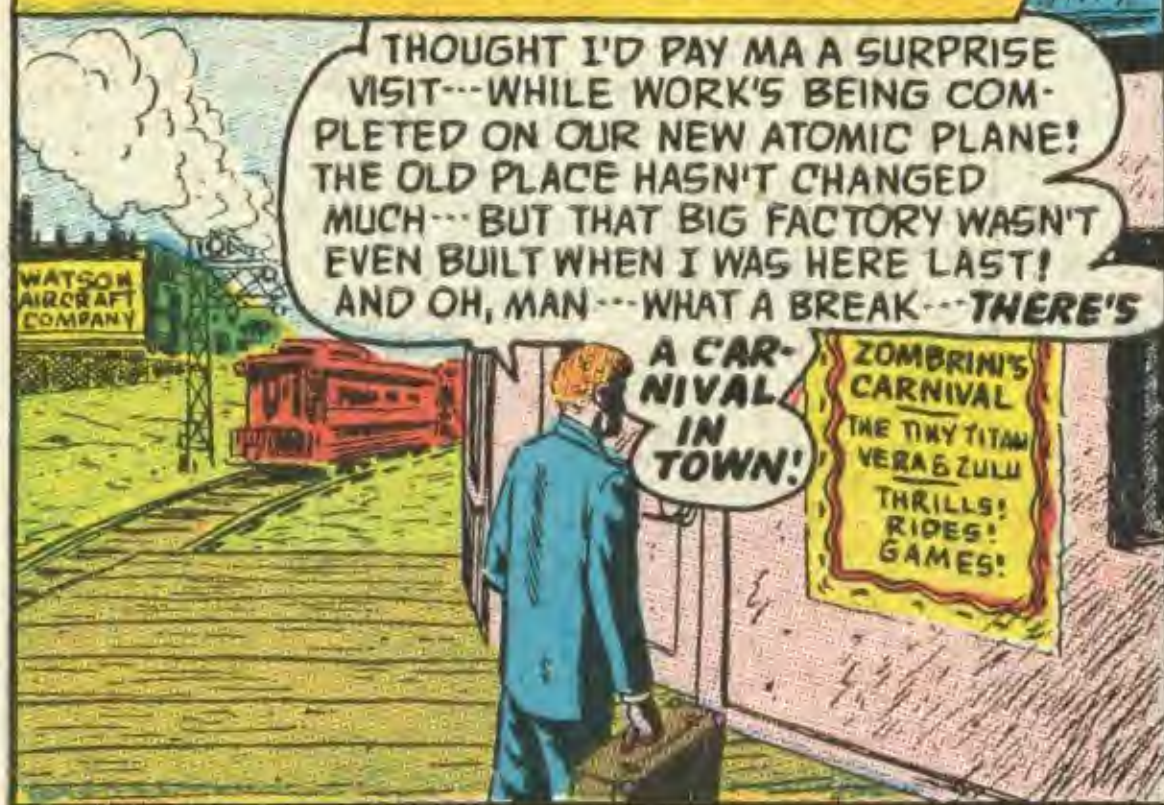


YOU'VE WATCHED THE **ATOMIC COMMANDOS** IN ACTION... YOU'VE SEEN THEM METHODICALLY OUT-THINK AND RELENTLESSLY OUT-FIGHT OUR COUNTRY'S ENEMIES... AND BY NOW YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO PUT YOUR FINGER ON THE FACTOR THAT MAKES THEM UNBEATABLE... **TEAMWORK!** BUT WHAT HAPPENS ON THOSE RARE OCCASIONS WHEN ONE OF THIS BATTLING QUARTET MUST FACE DANGER **ALONE**... WHEN HE'S LEFT TO HIS OWN RESOURCES IN AN ENCOUNTER THAT THREATENS DEATH? THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN **CHAMP** COMES FACE TO FACE WITH A SPY WHO CLAIMS TO BE THE STRONGEST MAN IN THE WORLD... IN A FIGHT-TO-THE-FINISH, NO HOLDS-BARRED CONTEST THAT'S JUST PART OF...

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN

ATOMIC COMMANDO!

THE WORLD-WIDE MISSIONS OF THE **ATOMIC COMMANDOS**... THE FACT THAT THREATS TO THE NATION NEVER TAKE A HOLIDAY... GAVE THEM LITTLE CHANCE TO FOLLOW THEIR PERSONAL LIVES! BUT NOW, AFTER NEARLY TWO YEARS... **CHAMP** HAS COME HOME!



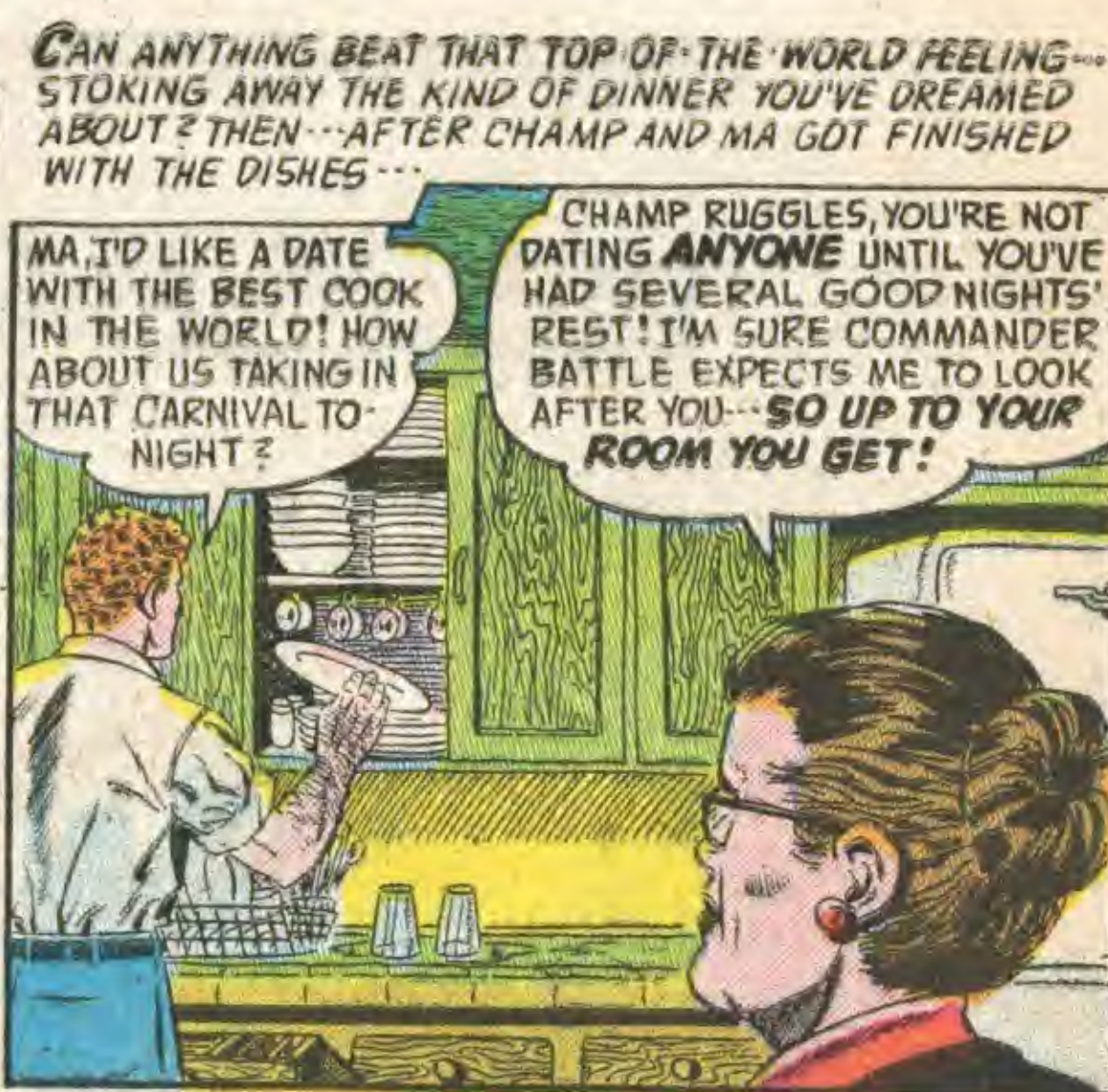
IT'S HARD TO VISUALIZE GLORY... PATRIOTISM... THE IDEALS FOR WHICH THE **ATOMIC COMMANDOS** FIGHT! BUT YOU COME PRETTY CLOSE TO IT IN A MOMENT LIKE THIS... ALONG A QUIET, ELM-SHADED STREET...





DO YOU THINK I HAVE TO GUESS WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH, CHAMP? SOMETIMES THE NEWS IS HELD UP FOR SECURITY REASONS, BUT I'VE GOT NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS ON EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE---AND I'M PROUD TO THINK HOW MUCH COMMANDER BATTLE RELIES ON YOU!

AW, I DON'T DESERVE ANY SPECIAL CREDIT! AFTER ALL, MA---WE WORK AS A UNIT!



MA, I'D LIKE A DATE WITH THE BEST COOK IN THE WORLD! HOW ABOUT US TAKING IN THAT CARNIVAL TONIGHT?

CHAMP RUGGLES, YOU'RE NOT DATING **ANYONE** UNTIL YOU'VE HAD SEVERAL GOOD NIGHTS' REST! I'M SURE COMMANDER BATTLE EXPECTS ME TO LOOK AFTER YOU---**SO UP TO YOUR ROOM YOU GET!**

DUTIFULLY, CHAMP TRUDGED UPSTAIRS! SOON AFTERWARD, THE LIGHTS WINKED OUT BELOW---AND A WINDOW SLID NOISELESSLY OPEN!



I HAVEN'T DONE **THIS** FOR YEARS---BUT A COUPLE OF HOURS AT THAT CARNIVAL WILL HELP ME RELAX!

CARNIVALS ARE HARD TO RESIST! THE BRILLIANT LIGHTS---THE CLATTER OF THE DODGE-'EM CARS---THE THROATY SPIEL OF THE SIDESHOW BARKER! WHO'D BLAME CHAMP FOR NOT REALIZING HOW DIFFERENT **THIS ONE** WOULD BE?

VERA
GORILLA
ZULU

STEP UP, FOLKS---STEP UP! YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR THE MOST STARTLING AND STUPENDOUS SIDESHOW YOU'VE EVER SEEN---ALL FOR JUST ONE QUARTER OF A DOLLAR!



PRESENTING---**THE TINY TITAN!** YOU'RE LOOKING AT A MICROSCOPIC MASS OF MUSCLE, FOLKS---A HALF-PINT HERCULEAN HE-MAN---**THE GREATEST WEIGHT-LIFTER OF ALL TIME!**

SEEMS I REMEMBER MY NAME'S STILL IN THE RECORD BOOK---BUT THIS OUGHT TO BE GOOD FOR LAUGHS!



A CHUCKLE RIPPLED THROUGH THE CROWD AS THE GRIM-FACED MIDGET STOOPED---GRASPING THE BAR WITH HIS DOLL-LIKE HAND! BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING OMINOUSLY CONFIDENT IN HIS STANCE---SOMETHING CHALLENGING IN ZOMBRINI'S RASPING VOICE!

NO ONE'S EVER DONE IT---NO ONE'S EVER TRIED IT! THE TINY TITAN WILL NOW LIFT FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS---ONE QUARTER OFF A TON!

YOU'RE A LOT BIGGER THAN THIS PUFFING MIDGET---HOW MUCH CAN YOU LIFT? WHAT WOULD YOU THINK IF YOU'D BEEN THERE WITH CHAMP---AND SAW IT HAPPEN?

IT'S CRAZY! A RUNT LIKE THAT CAN'T BE STRONGER THAN I AM!



ALMOST WITHOUT THINKING... CHAMP LEAPED TO THE PLATFORM! FOR A SECOND, HE GLANCED TOWARD THE HEAVY-BEAMED CEILING... AND THEN, UNEXPECTEDLY...

SCRAM OFF OF HERE, YOU BIG LUNK!

YEP... I EXPECTED TO FIND SOMETHING UP THERE!

THERE WAS A BELLOWING SNARL AS A BONE-CRUSHING GRIP CLOSED ON CHAMP'S ARM... THE MOMENTARY GLIMPSE OF A TOWERING, SHAGGY FORM AS HE HURTLIED THROUGH THE AIR!

GARRRGH!

ZULU... STOP!

ZULU FEELS VERY PROTECTIVE TOWARD THE TINY TITAN! PLEASE FORGIVE HIM... HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HE WAS DOING!

I COULD WONDER ABOUT THAT, SISTER!

CHAMP HAD SPOTTED SOMETHING AT THE TOP OF THE PLATFORM, DIRECTLY ABOVE THE TINY TITAN... BUT HE WASN'T FORCING THE ISSUE YET! AS HE WALKED OFF INTO THE CROWD...

WE GOT RID OF THAT YOKEL JUST IN TIME, ZOMBRINI!

WHERE HAVE I SEEN HIM BEFORE, VERA? I'M TRYING TO THINK... WHERE?

THERE'S A POWERFUL ELECTROMAGNET ABOVE THAT PLATFORM... AND IT LIFTS THAT FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS FOR TINY EVERY TIME ZOMBRINI PRESSES A BUTTON! THAT'S A PRETTY ELABORATE GIMMICK FOR A SMALL-TIME CARNIVAL... AND I'M GOING TO STICK AROUND UNTIL I LEARN MORE!

DODGE 'EM 10' RIDE 10'

THE RIDES RATTLED TO A HALT... AND THE CARNIVAL CLOSED FOR THE NIGHT! IN THE SHADOWS, CHAMP WAITED... SPURRED BY A HUNCH, THAT WAS MORE THAN A CASE OF SIDESHOW TRICKERY!

THE GIRL AND THE MIDGET ARE IN A HUDDLE WITH ZOMBRINI! THAT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO LOOK AROUND THE OTHER TENT!

FOR AN INSTANT, CHAMP FROZE IN HIS TRACKS WHEN HE SAW THAT SHAGGY FORM LOOMING IN THE DARKNESS! HE REMEMBERED THAT TERRIBLE GRIP...

IT'S JUST A GORILLA HIDE! IN OTHER WORDS... ZULU'S A MAN!

A MIDGET WHO PRETENDED TO LIFT A TREMENDOUS WEIGHT... AND A MAN WHO PRETENDED TO BE A GORILLA! QUITE A CARNIVAL... AND THE MORE CHAMP THOUGHT ABOUT IT... THE MORE HE WONDERED IF IT WAS A CARNIVAL!

IT WAS A RISKY MOVE... BUT AS CHAMP PLODDED INTO THE TENT A MOMENT LATER... IT WORKED!

SKULKO! IN A FLASH, CHAMP REMEMBERED THE NAME... THAT OF A TOP-RANKING SABOTEUR WHO HAD ESCAPED AN F.B.I. DRAGNET FOR OVER A YEAR... EVEN THOUGH HIS PICTURE HAD BEEN FLASHED ON TV... POSTED IN EVERY POLICE STATION IN THE COUNTRY! WITH HIS TREMENDOUS BUILD, SKULKO SHOULD HAVE BEEN SPOTTED ANYWHERE... IF HE HADN'T FOUND A PERFECT DISGUISE...

ABOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE, SKULKO!

HOW COME YOU'RE STILL WEARING THAT GORILLA OUTFIT? THERE'S NO CHANCE OF ANYONE RECOGNIZING YOU NOW... IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT!

AND I'M WEARING IT!

SOMETHING TELLS ME ZOMBRINI'S USING THIS DEAL AS A FRONT! THERE'S ONE WAY TO FIND OUT... ALL I'VE GOT TO DO IS SLIP INTO THIS GORILLA OUTFIT AND JOIN THE POW-WOW IN ZOMBRINI'S TENT!



VERA HAD WONDERED WHY THE COSTUME WAS BEING WORN... AND NOW HER COLD GAZE WAS FIXED ON CHAMP AS HE LUMBERED TO THE TABLE! HE KNEW SHE WAS SUSPICIOUS AND BRACED HIMSELF FOR A SHOWDOWN... BUT THEN... ZOMBRINI TOOK OVER!

NOW THAT SKULKO'S HERE... WE'LL GO OVER THE ROUTINE FOR TONIGHT'S JOB! THE WATSON AIRCRAFT PLANT IS PATROLLED OUTSIDE BY TWO WATCHMEN... AND SKULKO CAN DISPOSE OF THEM! SINCE THE NEW SKYBOLT PLANE IS TOP SECRET, NOT EVEN THE WATCHMEN HAVE KEYS TO THE PLANT... SO WE'LL ENTER IN THE USUAL WAY!

AH! ANOTHER JOB FOR ME!



EXACTLY! FIFTY FEET FROM THE MAIN GATE THERE'S A TWO-FOOT DRAIN PIPE RUNNING UNDER THE WALL... AND ONCE TINY CRAWLS THROUGH, HE CAN OPEN THE DELIVERY GATE FROM THE INSIDE! THEN WE'LL NEED ONLY A FEW MINUTES, WITH VERA ACTING AS LOOKOUT, TO STEAL THE SKYBOLT PLANS... AND SET A TIME BOMB THAT WILL DESTROY THE PLANT!



THIS WAS THE RISK CHAMP TOOK... AND NOW IT TOWERED IN THE TENT ENTRANCE... THE HULKING, THREE-HUNDRED-POUND FRAME OF THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS SPY!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

SKULKO!



ZOMBRINI AND TINY BOTH LUNGED AS CHAMP LURCHED TO HIS FEET... SLOWED DOWN BY THE HEAVY COSTUME! IN A SINGLE MOTION, HE FLUNG THEM ASIDE... AND TURNED SQUARELY INTO A SLEDGE-HAMMER BLOW THAT WOULD HAVE STOPPED A TRUCK!





FOR A MOMENT, THE TENT SEEMED TO REEL AROUND CHAMP! IF A SINGLE PUNCH FROM SKULKO COULD DO THIS, HE KNEW HE'D HAVE TO PLAY FOR TIME...

TRYING TO IMPERSONATE ME, HUH? WHO IS HE?

I THOUGHT I'D SEEN HIM BEFORE, AND NOW I KNOW WHERE... IN THE NEWSPAPERS! HE'S ONE OF THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS!



CLEVER SETUP YOU'VE GOT HERE, ZOMBRINI!

SURE! A SMALL CARNIVAL DOESN'T ATTRACT MUCH ATTENTION... WHO WOULD THINK OF LINKING THE FACT THAT IN EVERY TOWN IN WHICH WE'VE APPEARED, THERE HAS BEEN EITHER SABOTAGE OR THE THEFT OF IMPORTANT DEFENSE PLANS?



YES, SABOTAGE IS AN OLD STORY TO US... BUT TONIGHT'S JOB WILL BE SOMETHING SPECIAL! IT'S GOING TO INCLUDE GETTING RID OF AN ATOMIC COMMANDO!

NOT WITH THAT GUN, ZOMBRINI! I'VE HEARD HOW MUCH THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS DEPEND ON THE STRENGTH OF CHAMP RUGGLES... THAT HE'S A STAR ATHLETE WHO CAN HOLD HIS OWN AGAINST ANY-ONE! NOW I'M READY TO SETTLE THE POINT... FOR GOOD...



...WITH MY BARE HANDS!



BEFORE CHAMP COULD RISE, SKULKO HAD HIM IN THAT APE-LIKE GRIP...

COME OUT HERE WITH THE OTHERS, ZOMBRINI! THIS IS SOMETHING YOU'LL WANT TO WATCH!



GROPINGLY, CHAMP STRUGGLED TO ONE KNEE... FEELING THE PLATFORM QUIVER AS SKULKO LEAPED TO ATTACK!



NOW THAT WE'RE ON THE PLATFORM... WE'LL FINISH THINGS!

EVERYTHING IN HIM URGED HIM TO GET UP...TO FIGHT AS HE'D NEVER FOUGHT BEFORE...

I'M NOT
...LICKED
YET!

SO THIS IS ONE OF AMERICA'S
HEROES! TOO BAD YOU CAN'T
BRING THE **ATOMIC SUB** TO
THE RESCUE!



THE ATOMIC SUB! THOSE THREE WORDS JANGLED THROUGH CHAMP'S NERVES LIKE A CALL TO BATTLE! BEFORE HE KNEW IT, HE WAS ON HIS FEET... HIS EYES CLEARING AS HE DODGED... HIS FISTS THUDDING HARD!



He THOUGHT STRUCK SKULKO THAT HE HAD JEERED TOO SOON...BUT THAT WAS NOTHING TO WHAT STRUCK HIM NEXT!



PLEASE,
SKULKO
...GET
UP!

WAIT! I'LL
TAKE CARE
OF THINGS
...MY OWN
WAY!



ZOMBRINI'S FINGER WAS ON A BUTTON... AND IN A SINGLE QUICK GLANCE, CHAMP KNEW WHAT IT MEANT!



THERE WAS NO TIME TO DODGE...TIME ONLY TO BRACE HIMSELF AND RAISE HIS ARMS! THEN, WITH A SPINE-JOLTING IMPACT...



THIS WAS A DEAD WEIGHT A HUNDRED POUNDS HEAVIER THAN THE ONE CHAMP LIFTED WHEN HE WON THE A.A.U. CHAMPIONSHIP...BUT HE WASN'T THINKING ABOUT THAT NOW! SKULKO HAD LURCHED TO HIS FEET...

COME
ON, SKULKO
...GET
HIM!

HE'LL NEED SOME EXERCISE
FIRST! HERE YOU ARE,
MUSCLES...CATCH!





TWICE CHAMP DANCED AWAY FROM THE DERRICK-LIKE SWINGS OF THOSE MIGHTY ARMS BEFORE HE SAW AN OPENING...AND ONE OPENING WAS ALL HE NEEDED!

That FINISHED COMMUNISM'S SO-CALLED STRONGEST MAN IN THE WORLD...THE MOST DANGEROUS SINGLE ADVERSARY CHAMP HAD EVER FACED! BUT AS HE TURNED...HE FOUND THE DANGER WAS FAR FROM OVER!



I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE, MY FRIEND... BUT FIRST...

I WOULDN'T TRY, SISTER... HEAR THAT SIREN? WE'VE BEEN THROWING A LOT OF WEIGHT AROUND THE PREMISES TONIGHT...AND YOU CAN'T BLAME THE POLICE FOR GETTING CURIOUS!



A MOMENT LATER, THE FOUR PLOTTERS BEGAN A RIDE THAT WOULD LEAD THEM TO CELLS AT LEAVENWORTH! ONCE AGAIN, OUR ENEMIES HAD LEARNED THAT EVEN THE CRAFTIEST PLANS ARE BOUND TO BACKFIRE...ONCE AN ATOMIC COMMANDO SWINGS INTO ACTION!

GOSH, CHAMP...HOW COME YOU DON'T WANT US TO SPILL THIS STORY TO THE LOCAL PAPERS? HOME TOWN HERO CAPTURES SABOTAGE RING...IT'D BE A SENSATION!

SORRY...I'VE GOTTA ASK FOR COMPLETE SECRECY IN THIS DEAL!



I GET IT, CHAMP! A MATTER OF SECURITY REGULATIONS, HUH?

WELL...NOT EXACTLY! BUT THE FACT IS...MY MOTHER DOESN'T KNOW I'M OUT!



WHEN YOU REALIZE WHAT A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ATOMIC COMMANDO CAN HOLD...YOU'LL HAVE AN IDEA OF THE RAPID-FIRE THRILLS THAT ARE COMING UP IN THEIR NEXT FULL-SCALE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY! REMEMBER IT'S YOUR DEMOCRACY AND YOUR FIGHT...AND MAKE SURE YOU'RE WITH THE ATOMIC COMMANDOS...IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

The END!

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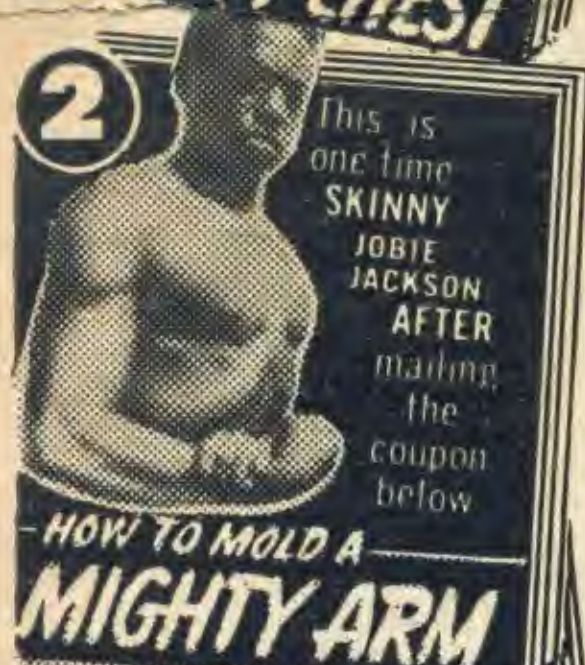
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